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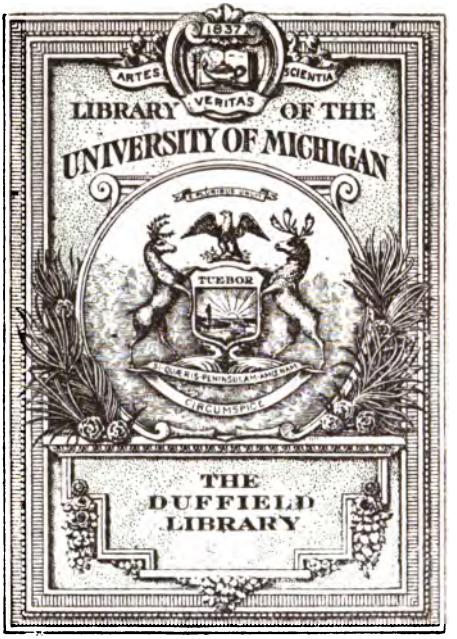

THE GIFT OF
THE TAPPAN PRESBYTERIAN ASSOCIATION

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George Duffield Jr

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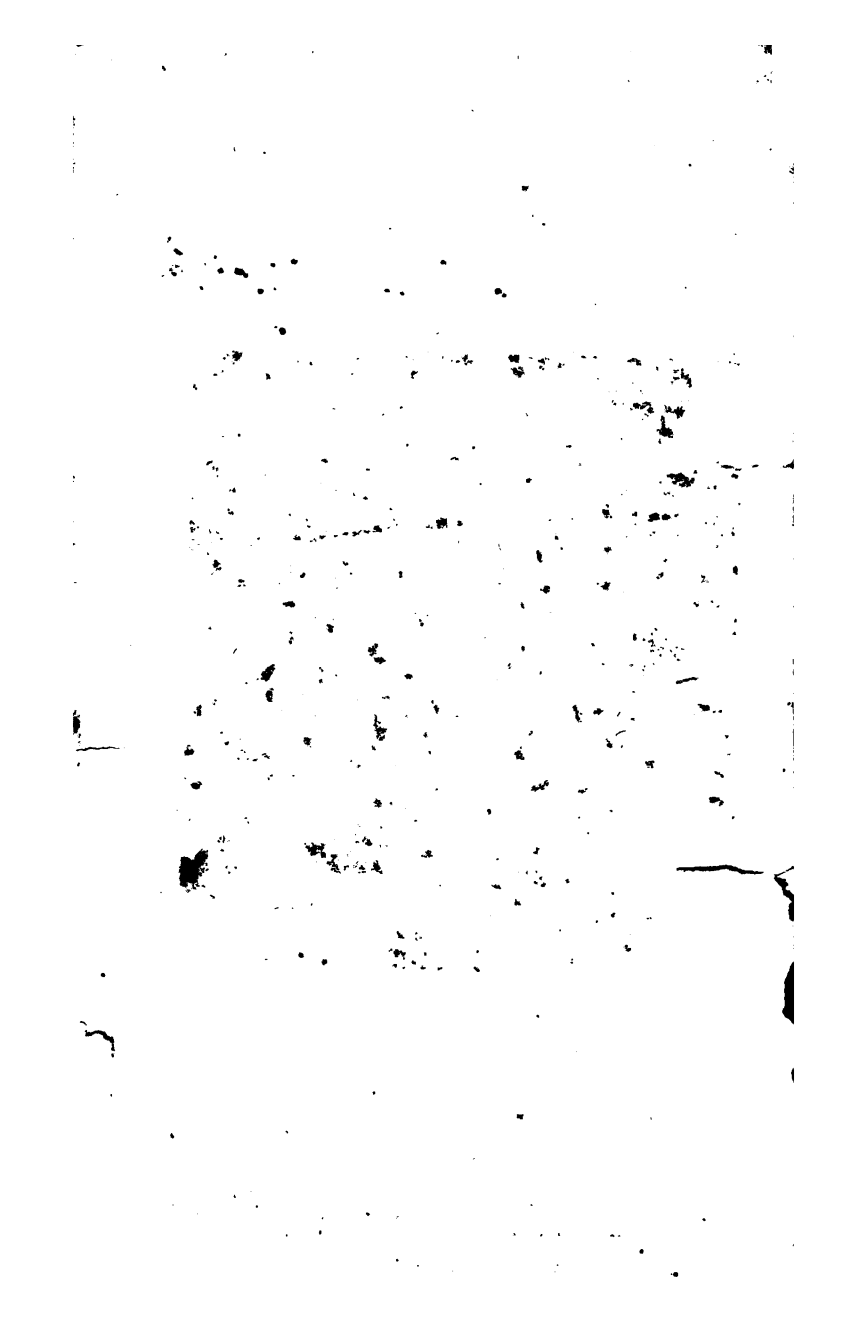

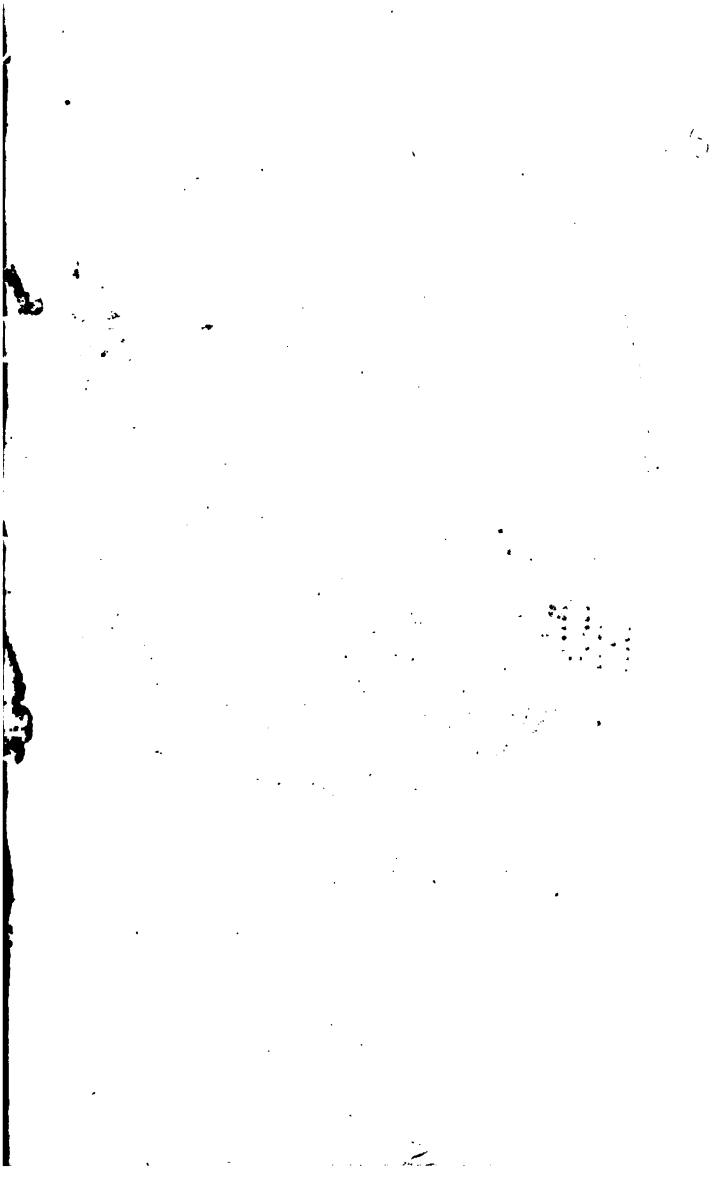

Rev. SAMUEL HOPKINS. D.D.

G. W. Bethune

SKETCHES

OF THE LIFE OF THE LATE,

REV. SAMUEL HOPKINS, D. D.

Pastor of the first Congregational Church in Newport,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF;

INTERSPERSED WITH MARGINAL NOTES

EXTRACTED FROM HIS PRIVATE DIARY:

F365T

TO WHICH IS ADDED;

A DIALOGUE,

BY THE SAME HAND,

ON THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF TRUE CHRISTIAN SUBMISSION;

ALSO, A SERIOUS ADDRESS TO

PROFESSING CHRISTIANS:

CLOSED BY DR. HART's SERMON AT HIS FUNERAL:

WITH AN INTRODUCTION TO THE WHOLE,

BY THE EDITOR.

PUBLISHED BY

STEPHEN WEST, D. D.

Pastor of the Church in Stockbridge.

PUBLISHED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE knowledge of the lives and characters of ſuch as have been eminent for piety and uſefulneſs, can hardly fail of being inſtructive and edifying. We trace, in them, the footſteps of divine power and providence in preparing them for ſervice in the kingdom of Chriſt, and to be bleſſings to the world. And the examples we have, in them, of the manner and ſeveral ſteps by which they attained, through the bleſſing of God, to eminence in knowledge and piety, are greatly fitted to inſpire candid minds with a deſire to imitate them.

In theſe views, the memoirs of few lives have been preſented to the public, which may be expected to be more entertaining and uſeful, than thoſe of the late *Rev. Dr. Samuel Hopkins.* Theſe, the reader will find contained in "Sketches" written by the Doctor himſelf; which were compoſed and arranged in a late period of his life. The former part was written before the attack of that paralytic diſorder, which, finally, occaſioned his death: the latter, after it. By

the laſt it appears, that however his nervous ſyſtem and bodily organs had been affected by the ſhock, his mental powers remained entire; being ſcarcely at all impaired, either by age, or by a diſorder, which uſually debilitates the *mind* as well as the body. The manner in which the following ſketches are written, and the unaffected ſimplicity in which they appear, cannot fail of engaging the attention and eſteem of the pious and judicious reader.

With a mind naturally clear and diſcerning, he appeared, in early life, to have felt the power of divine truth, and to have imbibed the ſentiments and ſpirit of chriſtianity. And ſo deep were the impreſſions made, by the power and ſpirit of God, on his conſcience, and on his heart, that he was ſoon brought to a fixed, ſettled determination of mind to devote himſelf—his powers—his all—his life to the ſervice of Chriſt. The work of the goſpel miniſtry being more congenial with the feelings of his heart than any other employment in life, he early, on leaving college, engaged in a courſe of ſtudy with a view of being qualified for it. As this was the work for which his heart thirſted, he judged that, in this, he might be moſt uſeful. The deep and ſolemn ſenſe he had of its importance, and the views and ſentiments with which he entered upon it,

may be ſeen in ſome of the *extracts from his private diary* inſerted in marginal notes.

As his mind was peculiarly formed for ſtudy and improvement, he was favored with a bodily conſtitution capable of enduring greater and more conſtant application, than moſt others. Few men have ſpent more hours in ſtudy and intenſe application, than Doctor Hopkins: And few have made ſuch advances and improvements in knowledge. His ſtudies were more confined to divinity, than thoſe of moſt men of his genius and application. This was the ſubject, which was ever neareſt his heart—In this was his great delight. And the uncommon proficiency he made in the knowledge of divine truth, and the extenſive acquaintance he gained with the doctrines of the chriſtian religion, have enabled him greatly to benefit mankind by his publications.

He poſſeſſed an unuſual talent of opening and explaining the holy ſcriptures—To him their doctrines and inſtructions ſeemed familiar. His mind appeared readily to enter into the ſpirit, and comprehend the meaning of paſſages, which, to others were obſcure. And, though he did not neglect conſulting expoſitors and commentators, with whoſe works he was well acquainted, his uncommon diſcernment of the ſenſe and impor

of the ſacred writings, ſeemed to ariſe, rather from a peculiar reliſh of divine truth, than from any aſſiſtance he derived from others—He appeared to be an example of the truth of our Saviour's words, "if thine eye be ſingle, thy whole body ſhall be full of light."

The natural ſtrength and powers of mind he poſſeſſed—his great application—and the clear and comprehenſive view he had of the doctrines of divine revelation, very evidently appear in his various publications; but more eſpecially, in that *Syſtem of divinity*, contained in two volumes, with which the public has lately been favored. *This* will remain a laſting monument of uncommon ability and application, as well as extenſive knowledge and piety. Nowhere can the reader find the doctrines of the ſacred writers ſo clearly drawn out to view, ſo juſtly arranged, and ſo fully and unanſwerably vindicated as in this:—Nor is there, probably, any other human compoſition extant, from which ſo good an underſtanding may be obtained of the goſpel-plan of ſalvation by Chriſt—the terms on which this ſalvation may be had—and, the temper and character neceſſary to the enjoyment of it. Here the reader finds thoſe doctrines, which are generally moſt unwelcome to the human heart—ſuch as thoſe, of the total moral depravity of human

nature—the abſolute decrees of God—particular election—univerſal divine providence and agency —and the diſtinguiſhing doctrines of *grace*, all treated with great perſpicuity and clearneſs; and, ſupported by a ſtrengh of argument, both from reaſon and the holy ſcriptures, which, it is thought, will forever exceed the ability of oppoſers to anſwer or overthrow. No human compoſition, it is apprehended, can be read with greater profit, by ſtudents in divinity, than theſe volumes. From theſe may be obtained a better and more extenſive acquaintance with the doctrines of divine revelation, than from many of the more voluminous writings of ancient, though reſpectable divines.

To Doctor Hopkins are we indebted for a better underſtanding of the deſign and end of what are generally termed *the means of grace*, and their uſe and application *as they reſpect impenitent, unconverted ſinners*, than was before had. His diſcerning mind, in the early part of his public miniſtry, diſcovered a manifeſt inconſiſtency in the *exhortations and directions given to unbelievers* by eminent divines, with the *doctrines* they publicly taught and ſtrenuouſly maintained. Though the doctrine of the total moral depravity and corruption of the human heart was clearly taught, and forcibly urged by Calviniſtic divines;

and, clear evidence produced from the holy ſcriptures, that all the exerciſes of the natural heart—all the doings and ſervices of unregenerate ſinners, were, not only unacceptable, but hateful in the ſight of God; yet to *ſuch doings and ſervices* did the unregenerate find themſelves exhorted and urged; and *this* as the appointed way to obtain the favor of God and converting grace. Though the *doctrines* were juſt and ſcriptural, the *exhortations* naturally operated, rather againſt, than in favor of the ſinner's ſenſible conviction of their truth. By attending to the Doctor's writings on this important ſubject, it ſoon became obvious, that, as the holy ſcriptures require the immediate exerciſe of godly ſorrow and repentance, ſinners of no deſcription are ever to be exhorted to any other doings, or ſuppoſed duties, than ſuch as imply love to God and holineſs.

No uninſpired divine, before Doctor Hopkins, had ever ſet this ſubject in a proper and ſcriptural light. And the benefit derived to the chriſtian cauſe, from his writings on this intereſting and important ſubject, is ſufficient to compenſate the ſtudy and labors of a whole life.

On account of his publications relative to this ſubject, he was the object of much obloquy and

reproach. Theſe he bore with great patience and meekneſs; ſupported by a full conviction, that it was in the cauſe of truth he ſuffered; and, by a hope and firm perſuaſion, that the ſentiments he had advanced were truly evangelical, would gain ground and become prevalent among the friends of truth and vital piety, and be bleſſed to the benefit of the cauſe of chriſtianity in general. And, through the goodneſs of God, he was preſerved in life to ſee the ſentiments he had advanced on this ſubject in connexion with other important doctrines of divine revelation, obtain greater ſpread and prevalence than he had, probably, ever expected would have been in his day.

By people of piety and diſcernment Doctor Hopkins was eſteemed one of the beſt of preachers. Though his public diſcourſes were leſs adapted to the paſſions, than thoſe of many others, they were unuſually full of matter and excellent inſtruction, fitted to reach the conſcience, and the heart, and to feed and nouriſh the lovers of truth and vital religion. Avoiding, thoſe abſtruſe reaſonings, which tend rather to confound, than to inſtruct the hearer, his ſermons were clear, perſpicuous and ſcriptural. Few, who paid any tolerable attention, ever found difficulty in underſtanding him. He

neither concealed, nor diſguiſed what he viwed as truth, however unpalatable, through fear of its being unpopular. However ungrateful the ſentiments he delivered might be to ſome, he ever meant to be underſtood. And ſo peculiarly fitted were his public diſcourſes to carry conviction, that ſuch as were not altogether friendly to doctrines he often taught, were yet at a loſs, when they heard him, to find any place for objection. He dwelt much on experimental religion, and was eminently an evangelical preacher. Few men equalled him in that air of ſolemnity and gravity, in the pulpit, which rarely fails of engaging the attention of an audience. And, as his delivery was far from being unanimated, his manner was ſuch as gave reaſon to ſuppoſe he felt what he ſpoke. He, accordingly, exceeded moſt others in ſolemnizing his hearers and commanding attention, wherever he preached.

As he obſerves in the ſketches of his life, he was never favored with any general awakening and attention to religion among the people of his own immediate charge. This, as the reader will find, he conſiders as an argument againſt the ſincerity of his chriſtian profeſſion. But when we reflect, that there is no divine promiſe, that the ſucceſs of miniſterial labors among a people, ſhall be in proportion to the wiſdom and fidelity with

which they are diſcharged; this ought to be conſidered as an objection of little weight againſt his piety and faithfulneſs. To eſtimate the character and fidelity of a goſpel preacher by the number of converſions, which are effected under his immediate miniſtrations, would go near to reproach the great Saviour himſelf. But few, comparatively, were brought to the love of the truth under the miniſtrations of Chriſt on earth—He was then, as has been the caſe ever ſince, generally deſpiſed and rejected of men. And though it be a great mercy, and a very rich bleſſing—meriting eternal thankfulneſs and praiſe, to be made inſtrumental of converſions amongſt the people to whom we preach, it is yet to be remembered, the glorious God ever ſhows himſelf a *ſovereign* in the beſtowment of ſaving, converting grace. Though *Paul* plant, and *Apollos* water, it is *God* who gives the increaſe.

Weaker means and inſtruments are, many times, peculiarly owned, and bleſſed to the ſalvation of ſinners; while ſuch as, to human view, are more able, ſeem left to complain, *we have labored in vain.* Things are wiſely ordered to miniſter univerſal conviction, that the power is all of God.

Doctor Hopkins ſeems to have been raiſed up,

in divine providence, rather for miniſtering light, comfort, and edification to chriſtians; opening, explaining and enforcing the true doctrines of the goſpel of Chriſt, and benefiting the church at large and mankind by his inſtructions; than for gathering new ſubjects into the family and kingdom of God. And, in theſe reſpects, he ſhone as a ſtar of the firſt magnitude; though he was not without the other ſeal of his miniſtry.

The principal features of the Doctor's character appear in his publications, and thoſe *ſketches* of his life, which are now offered to public view. There are others, however, which it is deſirable ſhould be known.

Honored as I was with his friendſhip, I may be liable to prejudice: But, on long and intimate acquaintance, it has appeared to me, that he poſſeſſed a *candor of mind* which is rarely to be found. Men of the firſt abilities and acquirements, like others, are apt to be tenacious of opinions they have once imbibed. Having formed them, as they apprehend, on mature thought and deliberation, they ſoon become poſſeſſed of a prejudice unfavorable to light and evidence, which might correct them. Rare it was, that any one was capable of detecting an error in the

ſentiments of Doctor Hopkins on moral and religious ſubjects. But he was remarkably open to conviction, whenever evidence was exhibited of the incorrectneſs of any of his opinions. Truth appeared to be ſo much the object of his ſearch, that he diſcovered an unuſual readineſs to admit it, from whatever quarter it came; and *that* even though he might find error in himſelf detected by it. Did we, all, ſearch the ſcriptures without *any* prepoſſeſſion or prejudice, we ſhould undoubtedly imbibe truth without error.

As might be expected with ſuch candor of mind, his manner, in verbal diſpute, was unuſually mild, fair, and moderate. Far from being overbearing, he ever gave every juſt advantage to his opponent; patiently hearing whatever he advanced in favor of his opinions, and giving him full opportunity to vindicate them by every argument he thought favorable. And as the Doctor had a happy talent of expreſſing his own arguments with peculiar perſpicuity; by theſe means he often convinced and gained over his oppoſers; when, had his manner been auſtere and overbearing, however concluſive his arguments, the oppoſite party would have remained unconvinced and received no benefit.

He had a mind peculiarly formed for friendſhip; and appeared to be indeed the faithful friend. No one entered into greater nearneſs and intimacy of chriſtian friendſhip, or gave, or ſeemed to enjoy greater pleaſure in the ſociety and friendſhip of chriſtians. And his unaffected eaſe and openneſs, together with the inſtructiveneſs of his converſation were ſuch, as made his company greatly ſought, and his friendſhip highly valued by the lovers of religion and truth.

He never appeared deſirous of enriching himſelf and laying up treaſures on earth. As he poſſeſſed but a moderate portion of worldly ſubſtance, he never ſought opportunities to enlarge it. Having but little, he was content with little. The congregation, to which he miniſtered in Newport was ſmall: and though he was highly eſteemed by the people of his charge, he yet received but a ſcanty ſupport from them. What he ſtatedly received was in weekly contributions: but, though content with moderate living, this was inſufficient without aſſiſtance from other quarters.

Conſidering his worldly circumſtances and the ſcantineſs of his means, he was uncommonly liberal—He took pleaſure in miniſtering to the relief of the neceſſitous. Many ſtriking in-

ſtances of this, though conducted with ſecrecy and unaffected modeſty, will be remembered by thoſe, who experienced his liberality. He uniformly contributed, on quarterly meetings for prayer; and, on one of thoſe occaſions, an hundred dollars, which he appropriated to the promotion of the goſpel among the Africans. This was, probably, out of the money he unexpectedly received for the copy-right of his "Syſtem," which he mentions in the ſketches of his life. Without this, it cannot well be ſuppoſed, he would have had it in his power to make ſo large and generous a donation. To have the goſpel preached in Africa, and the knowledge of divine truth diffuſed there, was an object, in his view, of very great importance—His mind and his heart were much upon it. The conviction he had of the wickedneſs of enſlaving our fellow men, and of the injuries we had done to the nations of that continent, impreſſed him with a ſenſe of peculiar obligation on us, to contribute, as far as in our power, to the promotion of their ſpiritual good. This, he conſidered, as the beſt compenſation we are capable of making for our flagrant abuſes of them, and the very great injuſtice we have done them. Nor can we exhibit proper evidence of genuine repentance toward God, for the wickedneſs of which we have been guilty in enſlaving the negroes, with-

out much exertion to bring that unhappy people to the knowledge and acknowledgement of the truth as it is in Jeſus.

Doctor Hopkins had great command of his natural temper—Unkind treatment from others, he bore with great patience and meekneſs. The requiſite qualification of a biſhop, *that he be not ſoon angry*, he poſſeſſed. Paſſionate anger was rarely viſible in him—No inſtance of it had been obſerved, for many years before his death. Though far from being unfeeling, he appeared calm and ſerene under afflictions, many of which he experienced by deaths in his own family, and by the loſs of other near and dear friends. That they were all in the hand of Chriſt, ſeemed to be the principal ſupport and comfort of his heart.

His "Treatiſe" on the Millennium, at the cloſe of the "Syſtem of doctrines" which he publiſhed ſome few years before his death, diſcovers, not only his firm belief and joyful hope of the coming and approach of that happy period; but, his careful ſtudy and great application to the prophetic writings, and comprehenſive view and underſtanding of the general ſcheme of ſcripture prophecy. He has fixed the commencement of this happy ſtate at the ſame period with other the moſt noted and judicious writers on the ſubject.

At the close of the treatise, he gives his opinion what events, according to scripture prophecy, may be expected to take place, before the commencement of the happy, peaceful state of the church upon earth. How far the opinion he has given on this subject is authorised and supported by scripture authority, every reader will judge for himself. It will be recollected that this was published, A. D. 1793, and must, of course, have been written and prepared sometime before. That series of mighty revolutions and remarkable events, more particularly in Europe, which have, since, astonished the world, had then scarcely commenced. But no attentive reader, who carefully reviews that scene of events, and evils of various kinds, which have taken place since that period, can help observing a striking coincidence of the subsequent events with the predictions. So visible a correspondence of events, and those of various and different kinds, with what the Doctor has considered and foretold as likely to take place previously to the Millennium, and preparatory to it, would almost lead some to think that he was endued with a prophetic spirit. So far from this however, that he himself considered all pretences of this kind at the present day, by whomever made, as wholly without foundation, and a mark and evidence of great delusion.

But the manifeſt agreement of events, in many reſpects, with what he has predicted as likely to take place, may reaſonably be conſidered as ſome degree of evidence, that he puts a juſt conſtruction on thoſe prophetic writings, in which he ſuppoſes theſe events to be foretold: And, may rather ſerve to ſtrengthen, not only our belief in prophecy in general, but our expectation of a ſucceſſive train of evils and judgments before us. In this view of the matter, we may be excited to greater prayerfulneſs and vigilance—to watch, and keep our garments, leſt when our Lord cometh, we be found naked:—It being one obvious deſign of the great Head of the church, in forewarning his people of the dangers before them, and the evils he is about to bring on them and on the world, to excite them to expect and be prepared for them; that when they actually come, they might not faint, nor their faith fail.

The intereſt, which is felt in the lives of ſuch as have been eminent for piety and uſefulneſs, naturally excites a deſire to know ſomething of the manner in which they finiſhed their courſe, and the character and appearance they exhibited at the cloſing ſcene. In this view the following extract from a letter, written by a judicious friend in Newport, who was much with him in the laſt ſcenes of his life, may be gratifying to many.

"Laſt May, (that is, May, 1803,) the Doc-
"tor had a very ſevere fever, by which he was
"brought to the door of death; yet recovered
"ſo far as to preach in July, and continued to
"preach until a young man, whom he ſent for,
"came to aſſiſt him, who was here four Sab-
"baths, and then left us—The Doctor then,
"though with difficulty, preached five Sabbaths,
"the laſt of which was the 16th of October.
"He ſaid, when he got home, that now he had
"done—he could preach no more! though he
"was not ſick, only feeble, and much fatigued
"—his text, 1 Peter, v. 8. He ſlept comforta-
"bly, that night; but, in the morning, ſeemed
"to be poorly; and, after breakfaſt, lay down
"about two hours and ſlept, then waked, told
"me he was almoſt gone, and in a few minutes
"went into a ſtrong convulſion fit, which was
"thought to be apoplectic, and had all the ap-
"pearance of death. But, by the bleſſing of
"God on the exertions, which were made, he
"was brought to his ſenſes before night. Soon
"after he was ſeized with a violent dyſentery,
"which reduced him very low indeed: Yet he
"recovered ſo far as to ſit up in the eaſy-chair
"two or three hours in a day; but never had
"any appetite for food—and, for the whole
"nine weeks which he lived, hardly took an
"ounce of ſolid food.

"I eſteemed it a peculiar favor that the Doc-
"tor was ſpared, though in ſuch a ſtate of weak-
"neſs, that he had an opportunity of converſing
"but a little with his friends, to exhibit a moſt
"ſtriking example of patience and ſubmiſſion to
"the divine will.

"He poſſeſſed an uninterrupted peace; and
"though he could ſay but little, through his great
"inward weakneſs, yet he ſeemed to dwell in
"the cleareſt views of divine truth. The glory,
"which would ariſe to God, in the ſalvation of
"ſinners, filled his ſoul with ineffable joy. He
"had not one anxious thought about death—re-
"joiced that he was in the hand of Chriſt, and
"wholly at his diſpoſal. He thought much
"on thoſe words "*the glory that ſhould follow!*"
"—Said he ſometimes had *the joy of faith.* He
"was greatly refreſhed to ſee the wonderful
"work of God, in the congregation, under the
"preaching of the man, whom he introduced;
"and, gave his approbation and bleſſing to thoſe,
"who joined the church at this time—".

"He ſenſibly declined for better than two
"weeks; and, for more than two days, his
"bodily diſtreſs was beyond deſcription. He
"felt himſelf going, and ſaid he was willing.
"His reaſon was perfect to the laſt, and his pa-

"tience, in his agonies, aſtoniſhing. After a "very diſtreſſing turn we laid him down in his "bed—he ſeemed eaſier; and while a number "of us were ſitting round him, he breathed his "laſt without a ſigh or a groan—nor could we "tell the moment in which he went!"

Thus died this excellent man, who has been ſo great a bleſſing, and whoſe praiſe is in the churches. *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.* Though his perſonal labors on earth are at an end, their happy and beneficial effects ſtill remain, and are and will be thankfully enjoyed and rejoiced in by many. Though he is gone, the excellent writings he has left behind him, are ſtill read with pleaſure and profit; and generations yet to come, we truſt, will receive benefit and inſtruction from them.

That the following "ſketches" of the life of the late Doctor Hopkins may be entertaining, inſtructive and uſeful—That they may excite thankful acknowledgements to God for his great mercy in raiſing up ſo eminently faithful a ſervant, ſo long preſerving his valuable life, and ſtrengthening him to go through ſuch a ſeries of uſeful labors—That they may awaken the friends of Chriſt to earneſt and conſtant prayerfulneſs, that

a double portion of the excellent ſpirit, which appeared to be in him, might deſcend and reſt on his brethren in the miniſtry, whom he has left behind—And eſpecially, that they may be the means of quickening miniſters of the goſpel to application, to duty and to faithfulneſs, and to more conſtant, earneſt prayerfulneſs to God —That theſe may be the happy effects of the publication of the following "life," is the deſire and prayer of the

EDITOR.

LIFE OF

SAMUEL HOPKINS, D. D.

SOME brief ſketches of my paſt life, which I am induced to recollect, and commit to writing, for my own benefit, and for the gratification, and, perhaps, advantage of thoſe of my particular friends, and relatives, who ſhall ſurvive me; being now in the ſeventy-fifth year of my age.

I WAS born at Waterbury in Connecticut, on the Lord's day, September 17, 1721. My parents were profeſſors of religion; and I deſcended from chriſtian anceſtors, both by my father and my mother, as far back as I have been able to trace my deſcent. I conclude I and my anceſtors deſcended from thoſe called *Puritans* in the days of queen Elizabeth, above two hundred years ago, and have continued to bear that denomination, ſince, and were the firſt ſettlers of New-England. This I have conſidered to be the moſt

honourable and happy deſcent, to ſpring from anceſtors, who have been profeſſors of religion, without interruption during the courſe of two hundred years, and more: and many of them, if not all *real chriſtians*. And I have conſidered it as a favour that I was born on the ſabbath, and was perhaps publicly dedicated to Chriſt by baptiſm on the day in which I was born; and if not, certainly ſoon after.

As ſoon as I was capable of underſtanding, and attending to it, I was told that my father, when he was informed that he had a ſon born to him, ſaid, if the child ſhould live, he would give him a public education, that he might be a miniſter or a ſabbath-day-man, alluding to my being born on the ſabbath.

I was the firſt child of my parents that lived. They had one before, which was not alive when born, or died as ſoon as born. My mother was twenty years old when I was born, and my father thirty.

I have conſidered it as a great favour of God, that I was born and educated in a religious family, and among a people, in a country town, where a regard to religion and morality was common and prevalent; and the education of

children and youth was generally practiſed in ſuch a degree that young people were generally orderly in their behaviour, and abſtained from thoſe open vices, which were then too common in ſeaport and populous places. I do not recollect that I ever heard a profane word from the children and youth, with whom I was converſant, while I lived with my parents, which was till I was in my fifteenth year.

I from my youth was not volatile and wild, but rather of a ſober and ſteady make, and was not guilty of external irregularities, ſuch as diſobedience to parents, profanation of the ſabbath, lying, fooliſh jeſting, quarrelling, paſſion and anger, or raſh and profane words; and was diſpoſed to be diligent and faithful in whatever buſineſs I was employed; ſo that as I advanced in age, I gained the notice, eſteem and reſpect of the neighbourhood. I was, in general, greatly careleſs about all inviſible things; but was often plotting for ſomething, which then appeared to me good and great in this life; and often indulged and pleaſed myſelf with vain and fooliſh imaginations of what I ſhould be and do in this world. And ſometimes, though rarely, had ſome ſerious thoughts of God, and about my ſoul and a future world of happineſs and miſery. And I once had a dream of the future judgment,

in ſome meaſure agreeable to the repreſentation made of it by Chriſt himſelf in the xxvth chapter of Matthew. I dreamed that I and a brother of mine, who was about two years younger than me, were ſentenced to everlaſting miſery, and driven down to hell, with the reſt of the wicked. This greatly impreſſed my mind, for a long time after. And the impreſſion then made has not wholly worn off to this day.

As my father was a farmer, I was employed in labouring on the farm, with which buſineſs I was pleaſed, and made proficiency in it. I was frequently told, and often thought of the declaration of my father on the day on which I was born, *that he would bring me up to college*, as the phraſe then was for a public education. But I felt no particular inclination to this; but was rather inclined to labour on a farm: But what always turned my mind againſt going to college, was the years of abſence from my parents and their family, which were involved in it. Such abſence was intolerable to my childiſh mind, and was ſufficient to ſuppreſs the thought of going to learning.

But in the winter after I was fourteen years old, I retired much to a chamber in my father's houſe, and ſpent conſiderable time in reading, eſpecially

reading the bible; and began to feel more inclination to learning, and leſs to working on a farm; as our farming buſineſs did not go on ſo well as it had done, by reaſon of ſome particular circumſtances which had taken place. When my father perceived this, he told me, if I was inclined to go to learning, he would put me to a place where I might be fitted for the college. To which I readily conſented. Accordingly, I was put under the care and tuition of the Rev. John Graham of Woodbury, which joined Weſt or Waterbury, his meeting-houſe being about ten miles from my father's houſe. Here I fitted for college, with a number of others; and was examined and admitted a member of college in September 1737, being ſixteen years old on the ſeventeenth day of that month.

While a member of the college, I believe, I had the character of a ſober, ſtudious youth, and of a better ſcholar than the bigger half of the members of that ſociety; and had the approbation of the governours of the college. I avoided the intimacy and the company of the openly vicious; and indeed kept but little company, being attentive to my ſtudies. In the eighteenth or nineteenth year of my age, I cannot now certainly determine which, I made a

profeſſion of religion, and joined the church to which my parents belonged in Waterbury. I was ſerious, and was thought to be a pious youth, and I had this thought and hope of myſelf. I was conſtant in reading the bible, and in attending on public and ſecret religion. And ſometimes at night, in my retirement and devotion, when I thought of confeſſing the ſins I had been guilty of that day, and aſking pardon, I could not recollect that I had committed one ſin that day. Thus ignorant was I of my own heart, and of the ſpirituality, ſtrictneſs and extent of the divine law!! In this time I was at home, in a vacancy at college; and ſeveral men, who were groſs Arminians, entered into a diſpute with me about doctrines and religion. I was in theory a Calviniſt, and attempted to defend that ſcheme of doctrines, in oppoſition to them. In theſe we could not agree: But when we came to talk of practical religion, and of converſion, I agreed with them, allowing it to conſiſt chiefly in externals, overlooking the real and total depravity of the heart, and the renovation and great change which muſt take place in that, in order to true converſion and the exerciſe of real religion, having never experienced any thing of this kind. My mother heard the converſation; and after the company was gone, ſhe told me, ſhe was ſurprized to hear me agree with them in their no-

tion of converſion; and that I ſhould think real converſion was no more than that which I and they had deſcribed. This put me upon thinking, and raiſed a ſuſpicion in my own mind that I was a ſtranger to real converſion. But it wore off, without any abiding conviction of my deficiency.

From this experience of mine, I have been led to fear, and, in many inſtances, to conclude perſons to be ſtrangers to true converſion, who appear to have the ſame or no better notion of it, than I then had, and talk much as I did on that head, while they profeſs to believe Calviniſtic doctrines, though they chooſe to be conſidered as *moderate Calviniſts*. There are many of this ſort of profeſſing chriſtians, with whom I have been acquainted. When perſons build upon ſuch a falſe foundation, and ſet out in religion, and think themſelves chriſtians, without being *born of God*, and continue ſtrangers to a true and ſound converſion; they will be inclined to oppoſe or ſlight the moſt important and excellent exerciſes of experimental religion, and will be dry and fruitleſs chriſtians, and ignorant of true religious affections and enjoyments. And it will be no wonder if they looſe all their zeal for the peculiar doctrines of the goſpel, and

grow indifferent about them; if they do not gradually give them up, and renounce them.

While I was in this ſtate and ſituation of mind, Mr. Whitefield came into New-England; and after he had preached in Boſton, and other places, came to New-Haven, in his way to New-York. The attention of people in general was greatly awakened upon hearing the fame of him, that there was a remarkable preacher from England travelling through the country. The people flocked to hear him, when he came to New-Haven. Some travelled twenty miles out of the country to hear him. The aſſemblies were crowded and remarkably attentive; and people appeared generally to approve, and their converſation turned chiefly about him and his preaching. Some diſapproved of ſeveral things which he advanced, which occaſioned conſiderable diſpute. I heard him when he preached in public, and when he expounded in private in the evening; and highly approved of him; and was ſomewhat impreſſed by what he ſaid in public and in private; but did not in the leaſt call in queſtion my own good eſtate, that I remember. He preached againſt mixed dancing and frolicing of males and females together: which practice was then very common in New-England. This offended ſome, eſpecially young people. But I

remember I juſtified him in this in my own mind, and in converſation with thoſe who were diſpoſed to condemn him. This was in October 1740, when I had entered on my laſt year in college.

During that fall and the ſucceeding winter, there appeared to be much more attention to religion, than before, among people in general: And a number of miniſters in New-England were arouſed, and preached oftener than they had done, and appeared much more engaged and zealous, than before; and ſeveral came to New-Haven and preached in a manner ſo different from what had been uſual, that people in general appeared to be in ſome meaſure awakened, and more thoughtful on religious ſubjects, than they had been before.

Early in the next ſpring, in March, Mr. Gilbert Tennent, who had been itinerating in New-England, in Boſton and other places in the winter, came to New-Haven from Boſton, in his way to the ſouthward. He was a remarkably plain and rouſing preacher, and a remarkable awakening had been produced by his preaching, nd many hopeful converſions had taken place under his preaching, where he had itinerated. On his coming to New-Haven, the people ap-

peared to be almoſt univerſally arouſed, and flocked to hear him. He ſtayed about a week in New-Haven, and preached ſeventeen ſermons, moſt of them in the meeting-houſe; two or three in the college hall. His preaching appeared to be attended with a remarkable and mighty power. Thouſands, I believe, were awakened; and many cried out with diſtreſs and horror of mind, under a conviction of God's anger, and their conſtant expoſedneſs to fall into endleſs deſtruction. Many profeſſors of religion received conviction that they were not real chriſtians, and never were born again; which numbers publicly confeſſed, and put up notes, without mentioning their names, but their number; deſiring prayers for them as unconverted, and under this conviction. The members of college appeared to be univerſally awakened. A ſmall number thought themſelves chriſtians before they came to college, and I believe were ſo. Several of theſe appeared with an extraordinary zeal, and concern for the members of college; and without paying regard to the diſtinctions of higher and lower claſſes, they viſited every room in college, and diſcourſed freely and with the greateſt plainneſs with each one; eſpecially ſuch whom they conſidered to be in an unconverted ſtate, and who acknowledged themſelves to be ſo, ſetting before them their danger, and exhorting them to re-

pent, &c. The consciences of all seemed to be so far awakened as to lead them to hang their heads, and to pay at least a silent regard to their reprovers. And every person in the college appeared to be under a degree of awakening and conviction. The persons above mentioned, who thus distinguished themselves in zeal were two of them my class-mates, Buell and Youngs. The other was David Brainard. I attended to the whole, and approved of all they said and did. But retained my hope that I was a christian, and had little or no conversation with these zealous men. At length Brainard came into my room, I being there alone. I was not at ease with respect to his design in making me a visit then; determining that he came to satisfy himself whether I were a christian or not. And I resolved to keep him in the dark, and if possible prevent his getting any knowledge of my state or religion. I was therefore wholly on the reserve, being conscious that I had no religious experiences, or religious affections to tell of. In his conversation with me, he observed that he believed it impossible for a person to be converted and to be a real christian without feeling his heart, at sometimes at least, sensibly and greatly affected with the character of Christ, and strongly going out after him; or to that purpose.—This observation struck conviction into my mind. I

verily believed it to be true, and at the ſame time, was conſcious that I had never experienced any thing of this kind; and that I was a ſtranger to the exerciſe of real chriſtianity. I then determined that no one ſhould know from me, or any other way, if I could prevent it, that I was not a chriſtian, until I ſhould be converted: For it was mortifying to my pride to be thought to be no chriſtian, having made a chriſtian profeſſion, and having had the character of a chriſtian for ſome time; though I now knew myſelf not to be one. Brainard took his leave of me with bringing me to put off my reſerve; and what he then thought of me, I know not; but believe he ſtrongly ſuſpected, if he did not without heſitation conclude, that I was not a chriſtian.

My conviction fixed upon me. I ſaw I was indeed no chriſtian. The evil of my heart, the hardneſs and unbelief of it came more and more into view; and the evil caſe in which I was, appeared more and more dreadful. I felt myſelf a guilty, juſtly condemned creature, and my hope of relief by obtaining converſion failed more and more, and my condition appeared darker from day to day, and all help failed, and I felt myſelf to be nothing but ignorance, guilt and ſtupidity. I now loſt all deſire to conceal

my caſe from thoſe whom I conſidered to be chriſtians, and freely opened it to ſome of them. They appeared particularly to intereſt themſelves in my condition, and often converſed with me, and aſked me if I had any new views, &c. I conſtantly told them I was ſtill the ſame, in an unconverted ſtate, &c. Thus I continued for ſome weeks, generally retired, unleſs when I attended private meetings of young people, for prayer, &c. which were frequent then in college, and in the town.

At length as I was in my cloſet one [redacted]ing, while I was meditating, and in my devotions, a new and wonderful ſcene opened to my view. I had a ſenſe of the being and preſence of God, as I never had before; it being more of a reality, and more affecting and gl[redacted]us, than I had ever before perceived. And the character of Jeſus Chriſt the mediator came into view, and appeared ſuch a reality, and ſo glorious; and the way of ſalvation by him ſo wiſe, important and deſirable, that I was aſtoniſhed at myſelf that I had never ſeen theſe things before, which were ſo plain, pleaſing and wonderful. I longed to have all ſee and know theſe things as they now appeared to me. I was greatly affected, in the view of my own depravity, the ſinfulneſs, guilt, and odiouſneſs of my character; and tears flow-

ed in great plenty. After ſome time I left my cloſet, and went into the adjoining room, no other perſon being then there. I walked the room, all intent on theſe ſubjects, and took up Watts's verſion of the pſalms, and opened it at the fifty-firſt pſalm, and read the firſt, ſecond and third parts in long metre with ſtrong affections, and made it all my own language, and thought it was the language of my heart to God; I dwelled upon it with pleaſure, and wept much. And when I had laid the book aſide, my mind continued fixed on the ſubject, and in the exerciſe of devotion, confeſſion, adoration, petition, &c. in which I ſeemed to pour out my heart to God with great freedom. I continued all attention to the things of religion, in which moſt appeared more or leſs engaged. There were many inſtances, as was then ſuppoſed, of converſion. I felt a peculiar, pleaſing affection to thoſe, who were ſuppoſed to be chriſtians.

But two things appear, now, to me remarkable, with reſpect to my views and exerciſes which I have juſt now mentioned. *Firſt*, I had not then the leaſt thought or ſuſpicion that what I had experienced was converſion, or any thing like it, nor did ſuch a thought enter my mind, ſo far as I can recollect, till near a year after this, or if any ſuch thought was ſuggeſted at any

time, it was immediately rejected. I had formed an idea in my mind of converſion, what perſons who were converted muſt be, and how they muſt feel, which was ſo entirely different from that which I had ſeen and felt, that I was ſo far from a thought that I was converted, that I thought I *knew* I was not, and made no ſcruple to tell my friends ſo, from time to time. *Secondly*, I do not recollect that I ſaid a word to any perſon living of theſe exerciſes, or gave the leaſt hint of them to any one for almoſt a year after they took place. I did not think they were worth ſpeaking of, being nothing like converſion. And by degrees I ceaſed to recollect any thing of them, ſtill hoping and looking for ſomething greater and better, and of quite a different kind.

When I heard Mr. Tennent, as mentioned above, I thought he was the greateſt and beſt man, and the beſt preacher that I had ever ſeen or heard. His words were to me, "like apples of gold in pictures of ſilver." And I then thought that when I ſhould leave the college, as I was then in my laſt year, I would go and live with him, wherever I ſhould find him. But juſt before the commencement in September, when I was to take my degree, on the ſeventeenth day of which month I was twenty years old, Mr.

Edwards of Northampton came to New-Haven, and preached. He then preached the ſermon on *the trial of the ſpirits*, which was afterwards printed. I had before read his ſermons on juſtification, &c. and his narrative of the remarkable converſions at Northampton, which took place about ſeven years before this. Though I then did not obtain any perſonal acquaintance with him, any farther than by hearing him preach: yet I conceived ſuch an eſteem of him, and was ſo pleaſed with his preaching, that I altered my former determination with reſpect to Mr. Tennent, and concluded to go and live with Mr. Edwards, as ſoon as I ſhould have opportunity, though he lived about eighty miles from my father's houſe.

After I had taken my firſt degree, which was in September 1741, I retired to my father's in Waterbury. And being dejected and very gloomy in my mind, I lived a recluſe life for ſome months. Conſidering myſelf as a ſinful loſt creature, I ſpent moſt of my time in reading, meditation and prayer; and ſpent many whole days in faſting and prayer. My attention turned chiefly to my own ſinfulneſs, and as being wholly loſt in myſelf, of which I had an increaſing conviction. But I alſo attended to the ſtate of religion in the vicinity. There was a general

and uncommon attention to religion, and much preaching by miniſters who went from town to town, but oppoſition was made to the revival of religion, which now began to increaſe among miniſters and people. Some conſidered it as an evil work, in the whole of it. Others allowed there was ſome good attending it: but objected greatly to many things which took place and were practiſed by the friends and ſubjects of the work, as imprudent and wrong. I was a ſtrong advocate for the doctrines preached by the miniſters who were inſtruments of promoting the revival, and for the practices of thoſe who were the ſubjects of it, and were ſuppoſed to be converted. It is true, there were ſome things ſaid and practiſed, which I did not underſtand, and fully ſee through. But as I conſidered them as chriſtians, and myſelf as not one, and conſequently ignorant and incapable of judging, I concluded they muſt be right. I ſpent days in faſting and prayer, ſeeking the promotion of that which to me appeared to be true religion, and the ſuppreſſion of all oppoſition to it. I endeavoured to promote religion among the young people in the town: and encouraged them who were attentive and concerned to meet together for prayer, and to ſpend days of faſting and prayer together; eſpecially thoſe who were thought to be converted. When I ſaw perſons,

whom I conſidered to be unconverted, I felt diſpoſed to pray for them that they might be converted and ſaved; and felt great concern for ſome individuals of this character.

In the month of December, being furniſhed with a horſe, &c. I ſet out for Northampton, with a view to live with Mr. Edwards, where I was an utter ſtranger. When I arrived there, Mr. Edwards was not at home; but was received with great kindneſs by Mrs. Edwards and the family, and had encouragement that I might live there during the winter. Mr. Edwards was abroad on a preaching tour, as people in general were greatly attentive to religion and preaching, which was attended with remarkable effects, in the conviction and ſuppoſed converſion of multitudes. I was very gloomy and was moſt of the time retired in my chamber. After ſome-days Mrs. Edwards come into my chamber, and ſaid, "As I was now become one of the family for a ſeaſon, ſhe felt herſelf intereſted in my welfare; and ſhe obſerved that I appeared gloomy and dejected, ſhe hoped I would not think ſhe intruded by deſiring to know, and aſking me what was the occaſion of it," or to that purpoſe. I told her, the freedom ſhe uſed was agreeable to me; that the occaſion of the appearance which ſhe mentioned was the ſtate in

which I considered myself. I was in a Christless, graceless state, and had been under a degree of conviction, and concern for myself for a number of months: Had got no relief, and my case, instead of growing better, appeared to grow worse. Upon which we entered into a free conversation. And on the whole she told me, that she had peculiar exercises repecting me, since I had been in the family; that she trusted I should receive light and comfort, and doubted not that God intended yet to do great things by me, &c. This conversation did not sensibly raise my spirits in the least degree. My views of myself were such, and my prospect and hope of any good were so low, that I then paid no sensible regard to what she said.

Religion was now at a lower ebb at Northampton, than it had been of late, and than it appeared to be in the neighbouring towns, and in New-England in general. In the month of January Mr. Buell, my class-mate, whom I mentioned before, came to Northampton, having commenced a zealous preacher of the gospel; and was the means of greatly reviving the people to zeal in religion. He preached every day, and sometimes twice a day publicly, Mr. Edwards being out of town, preaching in distant towns. Professing christians appeared greatly

revived and comforted, and a number were under conviction, and I think there were some hopeful new converts. After Mr. Buell had preached in Northampton a week or two, he set out on a tour towards Boston, to preach in the towns in those parts; and I went with him. People crowded to hear him in every place; and great numbers were awakened, and many were thought to be converted. After continuing with him about two weeks, I returned to Northampton, when my exercises of mind were such that I *for the first time* admitted a hope that they were really gracious, and my mind immediately recurred back to the time when I had those views and affections, almost a year before, which have been mentioned, and they appeared to me to be of the same kind with those which now possessed my mind, and that the course of exercises which I since had, did not differ in kind from the first, and from those which I now had: though I had within this time often said I was certain I had no grace; and never had for a moment, that I can recollect, entertained the least degree of hope, or one thought that I was not in a state of nature. While at Northampton before this, I conversed with a number of christians who were thought to be knowing and eminent. I perceived that they thought I was a christian. But this did not have the least perceivable influence

on my mind, so as to excite the least hope that I was a christian: but thought and felt that I *knew* this was not, and could not, be true.*

I now determined to make known the whole of my exercises to Mr. Edwards, as far as I could communicate them. I told him my present exercises, and those which I have related which took place at college near a year before. When he had heard me, he asked me, Why I had not told him these things before? I told him it was because I had no thought that such exercises were conversion, or christian exercises, till very lately. He gave not his opinion expressly; nor did I desire he should; for I was far from relying on any man's judgment in such a case. But I supposed he entertained a hope that I was a christian.

From this time I turned my thoughts upon preaching the gospel. And with a view to obtain a license to preach, I left Mr. Edwards's in the latter end of March, and went home to

* *This, with sundry notes which follow, were taken from the private diary of Mr. Hopkins.*——1742 I have of late entertained a hope, that I did experience a saving change above a year ago; and, I find myself more, and more established in it. The Lord grant that I may not be deceived! I have some thoughts (God willing) of being examined, next week, in order to preach the sweet and everlasting gospel of Jesus. Though, many times, my heart shrinks at the thought. I hope the Lord will direct me.

Waterbury. And in May I applied to an Aſſociation of miniſters for approbation; which they granted, after I had paſſed and examination before them.*

* April 29. This day, I obtained a permit to go forth and preach the goſpel: but this is only from men. It hath been my requeſt, and I hope my ſincere deſire, that I might have a commiſſion from the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the great Lord of the harveſt, and be ſent forth by him, as a labourer in his vineyard.

July 3. I have this day rode from Hampton to Suffield, in order to preach. By the way I was much drawn out in ardent deſires that God would go with me, and that I might do ſomething for his honor. I heard two ſermons, and being deſired, I preached a third. The power of the Lord came down, and many of his children were filled, with the Holy Ghoſt! I had a freedom in ſpeaking which I never had before. I could not be heard all over the meeting houſe, by reaſon of the out cries of the people. Oh! wonderful, that the Lord ſhould make me his inſtrument to feed his lambs.

Being deſired, I preached again, this night, at the houſe where I lodged: many people came to hear the word; and, we had the divine preſence—many chriſtians were ſweetly refreſhed.

Auguſt 7. Seeing Chriſt requires that I deny myſelf, take up my croſs and renounce all for him, taking him for my only portion here and for ever:

I do now afreſh dedicate myſelf to the Lord, ſolemnly promiſing to renounce all other lords, and take him for my portion. I call heaven and earth to witneſs, that I now take the God of heaven and earth for my God. I now make myſelf over, with all that I have, or ever ſhall have, to him. I now promiſe allegiance to the God of heaven, that henceforth I will make it my only buſineſs to ſerve and honor him; begging his gracious aſſiſtance to perform my obligations, and to keep my ſolemn vows inviolate. It is done, I am no more my own, but I give myſelf away to God, to be his forever.

S. H.

After I had preached a few times at my native place, and places adjacent, occaſionally, I returned to Northampton, propoſing to ſpend ſometime in purſuing my ſtudies with Mr. Edwards, where I lived during the ſummer, preaching ſometimes in Mr. Edwards's pulpit, and to private meetings; and ſometimes rode out to neighbouring towns, and preached; for which I neither demanded, nor received any pay, except forty ſhillings old tenor, for preaching one Sabbath at Weſtfield: which was given without any demand or expectation from me. I alſo preached in the fall a number of ſabbaths at Bethlem to Mr. Bellamy's people, gratis, while he took a tour as far as Philadelphia in order to preach; as people in general then had a hearing ear.

In the beginning of December 1742, I was invited to preach at Symſbury in Connecticut, to a conſiderable congregation, who had lately left their miniſter; where I continued preaching moſt of the time till the next May. The greater part of the people appeared attentive and in ſome meaſure engaged in religion; but there were ſome oppoſers of the late revival of religion, and of the doctrines which were preached, and were much inſiſted upon by the friends of the revival. Though I refuſed to preach as a candidate, having no inclination to ſettle in the min-

iſtry at preſent; yet the town inſiſted upon having a meeting to ſee if they would give me a call to ſettle in the work of the miniſtry among them. When they met, it appeared that one hundred voted to give me a call, and that thirty voted againſt it. I told them, that I had no thought of ſettling in the miniſtry at preſent: But if I had, I thought their want of unanimity, and the number of oppoſers was a ſufficient reaſon for not complying with their requeſt. I therefore left them, and went to Northampton, with a view to purſue my ſtudies for a longer time with Mr. Edwards.*

* May 4, 1743. This evening, through the goodneſs of God, have had ſome refreſhing diſcoveries of divine things, longing that the whole world might be brought to the knowlege of God; and, that the children of God might live like themſelves, have views of an approaching eternity, and feel the love of God in their ſouls. That the miniſters of Chriſt might always experience how ſweet it is, to preach Chriſt, and offer him to fallen undone ſinners. Oh! how ſweet is it to get on mount Piſgah, and from thence behold the promiſed land!

Auguſt 25. Had ſome freedom in ſecret prayer, this night—was quite willing that God ſhould ſtop my mouth and never ſuffer me to ſpeak in his name to this people again, if he has not ſent me, or if it be his will I ſhould not; at the ſame time greatly deſirous that, by ſome means, they might be brought into the right way.

November 12. Have had more than ordinary longings after holineſs and ſanctification; at the ſame time thirſting after God, longing to know more of him, and be more acquainted with him.

26. Had a little, but ſweet glimpſe of ſome of the attri-

But after I had continued there a few weeks, I found myſelf unwell, grew more and more feeble, and was attended with rheumatic pains; ſo as to be unable to attend to my ſtudy, as I expected: And having, at that time ſeveral invitations from diſtant places, to go and preach to them, I concluded it was beſt to *ride* as the likelieſt way to recover my health. And being invited to go to a place then called *Houſatonock*, which was about ſixty miles from Northampton, I engaged to go there, and to preach to them two or three ſabbaths. Accordingly I arrived there the beginning of July, 1743. I found they were a ſmall people, there being but about thirty families in the town; that a number of them were poor, and generally they were without any concern about real religion, and given to many vices, which an eaſy country to live in, and living without the ſteady preaching of the goſpel, or public worſhip, naturally produced. But as they appeared unanimous in inviting me to ſettle among them, after I had been there a number of ſabbaths, I conſented, and was ordained on the 28th day of December, juſt at

butes of God, in ſecret prayer, eſpecially of his wiſdom, juſtice and holineſs. I ſaw that he knew what was beſt, and could do nothing but what is perfectly right and juſt, and infinitely beſt. What reaſon have I, to commit, all my concerns into his hands!

the end of the year 1743, when I was twenty-two years, three months, and eleven days old.*

I continued there in the work of the miniſtry till January 18, 1769, twenty-five years and about twenty days, when I was diſmiſſed, by the unanimous voice of a council called on that oc-

* December 24, 1743. Have faſted in ſecret to day, and had ſome unuſual aſſiſtance and enlargement. My courage is increaſed about ſettling here in the work of the miniſtry, being willing to go where God calls me, knowing that this life is not the place for happineſs, I muſt wait for that, till I launch into eternity and leave my corruption behind. I hope God hath given me ſtrength to deſire his preſence in the great work of the miniſtry.

28. I have this day ſolemnly and publicly given myſelf up to the work of the miniſtry. I am now engaged in a great work. Oh, that I might be faithful unto death.

Auguſt 28, 1744. This evening I have had unuſual freedom in prayer—had ſome ſenſe of the miſerable ſtate of my people, and ſome wreſtlings for them—Was enabled to give myſelf up afreſh to Chriſt, taking him with his croſs, being heartily willing if I might have his preſence, to undergo all poſſible hardſhips and trials—was enabled with an holy ſcorn to trample upon, and deſpiſe the world, with all created good.

July 25, 1749. Had freedom in ſecret prayer this evening; I think I can ſafely appeal to God, and ſolemnly declare before him, that I deſire his ſmiles and acceptance in his ſight above all things elſe, that I had rather be ſtripped of every worldly comfort than to be without this, yea without this all the world is nothing. I am alſo conſcious before God that I am ſincere, (though alas ſhamefully deficient) in the great work I have undertaken, and have never declined that which I ſeriouſly thought was for the ſpiritual good of my people, for any worldly intereſt.

caſion, and the conſent of the church. During this time I had no great apparent ſucceſs in the miniſtry. A ſmall number were hopefully converted, and a number of chriſtians moved into the place in this time, which increaſed the number in the church. But the congregation in general did not attend public worſhip, except ſome times; and were not willing to ſupport the goſpel. And a number turned churchmen, apparently and ſome of them profeſſedly, to get rid of paying any thing for the ſupport of the goſpel. And ſo great a number of others refuſed to do any thing this way, that after the church, and others who wiſhed to have me ſtay among them, had made a number of attempts, they declared there was, in their view, no proſpect or hope of my having a ſupport, if I continued with them; and therefore they could not object to my leaving them, eſpecially, if an eccleſiaſtical council ſhould adviſe. They therefore joined with me in calling a council, and laying the circumſtances of the caſe before them: who adviſed to my diſmiſſion, as mentioned above.

I then had a wife and eight children, and owned a houſe and good farm; and could, by leaving my ſtudy and attending to my farm, have ſupported myſelf and family, and continued to preach to thoſe who would come to hear me, after a ſort, with little ſtudy. But I then thought, and it was the judgment of the coun-

cil, and of the church, that as I could not be ſupported there, ſo as to be able to give myſelf wholly to the work of the miniſtry, and purſue my ſtudies without any great interruption from worldly cares and labour, it was my duty to leave them, and go where I could be ſupported. And if no ſuch place preſented; I could by turning my attention to farming ſupport myſelf. But ſince I have ſeen the unhappy conſequences to that people of my leaving them, many of which might probably have been prevented by my ſtaying with them, though I had ſtudied but little, and ſpent great part of my time in attention to my worldly concerns, I have ſometimes been ready to call in queſtion the reaſonableneſs of that concluſion, and have thought it probable we were all wrong in judging as we did, and that it was my duty to ſtay with that people in thoſe circumſtances. It is certain this would have been greatly to my *worldly* advantage. But I then thought I did right, and took the moſt prudent and proper ſteps, in taking the advice of a council, &c. And the iſſue rendered it neceſſary for me to leave the work of the miniſtry there. God has ordered it ſo, and his ends will be anſwered by it. This will be ſeen, another day; and it will be known who were the blameable inſtruments of bringing it about, and in what degree they were ſo.

In leſs than a year after I was ordained at Shef-

field (as it was then called; but has since obtained the name of Great-Barrington) on December 5, 1744, my mother died at Waterbury, being about forty-three years old. She died in child-bed, and the child died soon after. My father sent for me, when it was supposed my mother was like to die. But as I lived at the distance of fifty miles, and it was difficult travelling at that time of the year, I did not get there before my mother died. This was a grievous loss to me, which touched my tender feelings to the quick, as she was a kind, tender mother, and I loved her above any other relative.

On January 13, 1748, I was married to Miss Joanna Ingersol, daughter of Moses Ingersol of Great-Barrington. And on February 5, 1749,*

* February 4, 1749. Reached my father's house late in the night, find my father very sick, and two brothers and two sisters with the measels. My father knew me and asked me why I was so long in coming? told me he sent for me that I might see him once more before he died, asked me if I did not think he was dying? I told him no: I asked him if he was willing to die, his answer was such, as gave me great concern for him. I was quickly willing to part with him if he might but give me evidence of his comfortable hope in Christ, before he died, but was soon brought to give up this point, if he might but have a saving interest in Christ, and the comfort of it in his own soul, which my soul longed for and I was enabled to seek God earnestly, on his behalf, having my mouth filled with arguments, and after all was obliged to resign, and acknowledge God to be the sovereign potter, having a right to do what he would, and that he could do no wrong.

February 5. We apprehend my father is dying, I made

my father died at Waterbury, being about fifty-eight years old. He made me executor of his will. He left three young ſons, my brothers James, Daniel, and Mark. James was in his ſixteenth year, Daniel in his fourteenth, and Mark in his tenth. The two oldeſt my father furniſhed with a farm, and utenſils to cultivate it, propoſing that they ſhould be farmers. The youngeſt he committed to my care, deſiring me to give him a public education, for which he left a ſufficient eſtate. The two oldeſt ſoon got diſcouraged with farming, living fifty miles from me. Upon which, on their deſire, I ſold the farm, and took them into my own houſe, and fitted them all to enter the college at New-Haven. James, the oldeſt made ſuch proficiency in his ſtudies, that he entered the college before the other two. He was a promiſing young man, much eſteemed in college; eſpecially by his claſs-mates. But was taken ſick with a fever before his firſt year at college was ended, which put an end to his life. I was ſent for, when his ſickneſs was thought to be mortal; but my houſe being eighty miles from New-Haven, when I got there, he was juſt expiring, and died in an hour or two: This was a trying ſcene to me!

two prayers with him, he having been ſometime before ſpeechleſs, revived a little, and ſaid, *he had more hope now*, referring to the diſcourſe I had with him before. Theſe were almoſt the laſt words which he ſpake, and the moſt comfortable. I had ſome views of the infinity of God's mercy, and expreſſed it in prayer, and hope his ſoul felt it.

My other two brothers entered college after this, and were graduated. I had the whole care of their eſtate and of providing for them, the trouble of which was not ſmall.

My youngeſt brother, Mark, ſtudied the law, and followed that buſineſs. Was married, and had a number of children. He proſpered in the world, and ſuſtained a good and fair character: But died with ſickneſs when engaged in the war with Britain, about the time the American army evacuated New-York, being driven out by the Britiſh, I think in the year 1776. My brother Daniel is yet living, being ſettled in the miniſtry at Salem.

It was diſagreeable to me to go ſo far from Mr. Edwards, as I did when I ſettled at Great-Barrington, being at leaſt ſixty miles, with whom I had ſtudied ſo long: and who was able to aſſiſt me farther to make advancement in knowledge, could I live in his neighbourhood, ſo as to be able to viſit him often, and converſe with him, &c. But I was relieved and gratified with reſpect to this, in a few years after my ſettlement, by his removing from Northampton, and ſettling at Stockbridge, within ſeven miles of my houſe. Mr. Sergeant, who was miſſionary to the Indians at Stockbridge, when I ſettled at Great-Barrington, died on the 27th July, 1749. The next year the commiſſioners in Boſton, who had the

care of the Indian miſſion at Stockbridge, ſent to me their propoſal and deſire that I would accept of that miſſion, in which invitation both the white people, and the Indians at Stockbridge earneſtly joined. And the Indians ſent a particular meſſenger to me, to intreat me to come and be their miniſter. My anſwer was, that I would take the matter into ſerious conſideration. But as I did not think myſelf equal to ſuch a ſituation and buſineſs, I ſhould heſitate with regard to accepting the offer, though I ſhould not know of any other man better qualified to take the place. But as I had one in view who was much better qualified, every way, for ſuch a miſſion, if he could be obtained, as I hoped he could, if I otherwiſe were inclined to accept, I ſhould refuſe, in order to introduce him. Mr. Edwards was the man whom I had in view. He had been diſmiſſed from the church in Northampton in the year 1750. I therefore wrote to the commiſſioners in Boſton recommending him in the ſtrongeſt terms, as the moſt proper perſon for that miſſion, and mentioned him to the white people, and to the Indians, as the moſt ſuitable man for their miniſter. Accordingly he was introduced and ſettled there in Auguſt 1751, not quite eight years after I was ſettled at Great-Barrington.* He continued at Stockbridge a

* Monday May 9, 1753. Viſited H. D. to day, who is very ſick, and is not like to continue long; her ſiſter, E. came out of the door after me, appearing tenderly con-

little more than six years. In which time I enjoyed great pleasure and benefit by his company and conversation. But he was invited to the presidency of the college in Princeton, and in

cerned about herself desired me to pray for her, which I endeavoured to do when I got into my closet at home, and was enabled to cry to God for mercy for her soul with freedom and importunity. I cannot but hope that God enabled me to ask converting grace for her: and I humbly hope he will, in his time and way, give it. Oh! what a sweet duty is intercession, when it is done in faith with the whole heart. Every fervent intercessor has his reward *paid down*, and his prayer immediately returns into his own bosom.

May 8. This day H. D. died, she was a desirable youth, and hopefully converted a few weeks before she was taken sick: and God was pleased to make me a mean of awakening her, which I esteem a greater favor than if he had given me the whole world. This is the first that I have evidence of the conversion of, since I have been in the place; and surely it is well worth while to preach seven years, (which is the time I have been here) to be any ways instrumental of the conversion of one soul.

Wednesday, December 26. I have lately had distressing apprehensions of the badness of my state, being ready to conclude that such a sinner as I am, cannot possibly have any grace. This evening my spirit laboured under an unsupportable load of sin; and, my spirits were drunk up with anguish! As soon as I could, I shut myself up in my study, and fell upon my knees before God.

And first, I felt, and told God, that I had no where else to go but to him, though I had sinned so greatly against him. I felt and expressed, the extreme folly of forsaking him—that it was beyond all conception. I reflected on the aggravations of my sins, and saw they were so vastly multiplied and numerous, that it was impossible my mind should ever have a full view of them, or be able to reckon them. Yea, that there was not one aggravation, but what exceeded all my thoughts and conceptions. I thought it a wonder that I was not in hell, and confessed that God might justly send me there immediately; yea he might justly do what was unspeakably

the beginning of January 1758. He was diſmiſſed from Stockbridge by the advice of a council. This was a ſore trial to me, to have him thus taken from my neighbourhood, by which I

more dreadful, viz. continue me in the world till I had filled up the dreadful meaſure of my iniquities, and become a great and remarkable veſſel of wrath, fitted for that deſtruction, for which I was before appointed; that I might ſink down unſpeakably below *Judas*, and bear a more awful weight of wrath, than any other who ſhould go to hell.

Under theſe ſhocking apprehenſions of the weight of wrath which belonged to me, it came into my mind, that Chriſt could ſave from all this; he could deliver from ſuch a weighty wrath!

Immediately upon which my ſoul applied to him for help; and, this was the language of my heart, Lord Jeſus, I come, I come, I come to thee, I come for deliverance from this diſtinguiſhed place in hell, this uncommon weight of wrath. I thought I might hope in him for deliverance, though others went to hell, whoſe ſins were unſpeakably leſs than mine, and the truth contained in thoſe words, "*I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*," ſeemed ſweet and wonderful. I felt confounded, and my ſoul was filled with bluſhing and ſhame, ſaying from my heart, "Righteouſneſs belongeth unto thee, O Lord, but unto me ſhame and confuſion of face becauſe I have ſinned." In the concluſion of my petitions when I mentioned Chriſt as the perſon, in whoſe name I preſented myſelf and offering, I felt that he was the only Saviour, and ground of hope for ſinners. Had it not been for him, the leaſt ſin muſt have damned infallibly: and it ſeemed wonderful, even that the leaſt ſinner, and eſpecially ſuch a ſinner as I was, might have hope. When I came to conclude my devotions with aſcriptions of praiſe to God, my heart dwelt upon this, and I longed that the angels might praiſe God. I ſaw that God could glorify himſelf by ſaving me, but the tribute of praiſe which I could offer was mean, and inconſiderable—I wanted to liſp out his praiſe in ſome humble place. I roſe from my knees lightened and comforted: all nature put on a more pleaſant aſpect, and thoſe words "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy" dwelt on my heart with pleaſure and delight.

ſhould loſe the future benefit of his company and inſtructions. But I conſidered him as ſo eminently qualified for the preſidency of a college, that the proſpect of the good he would do in that ſtation, ſo much over balanced the benefit of his ſtaying at Stockbridge and my perſonal advantage, that I thought it my duty to give my voice for his removal to Princeton. But the agreeable proſpect of his uſefulneſs, as preſident of the college, was ſoon ended: For he had been but a few weeks in that ſtation before he was, by the advice of the truſtees, inoculated with the ſmall pox, which put an end to his life in the month of March 1758.

Upon the death of Mr. Edwards, Mrs. Edwards, in conſequence of verbal directions given to her by Mr. Edwards in his life time, put all his manuſcripts and his library into my hands, and care: His manuſcripts to be diſpoſed of by me, and two other miniſters. And Mrs. Edwards ſolicited me to write the life of Mr. Edwards, to be publiſhed, with a number of ſermons, to be ſelected from his manuſcripts. I conſidered myſelf very unequal to writing his life; but as by having the poſſeſſion of his manuſcripts, I was under better advantage to do it, than others, I engaged to do the beſt I could; and if it ſhould be approved of by a number of friendly, judicious miniſters, I would conſent to have it publiſhed, on condition that my name

ſhould not be put to it. Accordingly it was publiſhed with a number of poſthumous ſermons, the moſt of which I tranſcribed myſelf from his manuſcripts.

As theſe manuſcripts were in my hands a number of years, I paid my chief attention to them, until I had read them all; which conſiſted of a great number of volumes, ſome of them large, beſides ſermons, of which ſermons I did not read the whole. In doing this I had much pleaſure and profit. My mind became more engaged in ſtudy, riſing, great part of my time, at four o'clock in the morning to purſue my ſtudy, in which I took great pleaſure.

In the twenty five years which I ſpent at Great Barrington, I had but little apparent ſucceſs in the converſion of ſinners, though a number were hopefully converted, and the church was conſiderably increaſed in numbers. And the town made advances and proſpered in a good degree in their worldly circumſtances. And it appears from what has taken place at the time of my leaving them, and ſince, that my labours among them were a means of preventing many vices and evils, which have ſince that time been apparently increaſing among them. They have had no miniſter ſettled among them, except for a ſhort time, ſince I left them. The church has dwindled, and come to almoſt

nothing, or worſe. They have not proſpered in their worldly concerns, but the contrary. And are far from being reſpectable as a people or town in the ſight of thoſe who are acquainted with them, and their circumſtances.

While I lived at Great Barrington many things took place in the exerciſes of my own mind, and in reſpect to other perſons and objects, which cannot now be narrated: but muſt be left to that day, when every work will be brought into judgment, with every ſecret thing. I went through many trials and diſcouragements, both from within myſelf, and from things without. My mind was often ſunk in darkneſs and deſpondency, diſcouraged with myſelf; diſpleaſed with my own character and performances; and burdened with a ſenſe of my awful depravity and great deficiencies; and often doubted whether I were a real chriſtian. Yet I was ſupported by views of divine truths; and at times raiſed above all doubts, and to high religious enjoyments in the exerciſe of thoſe affections which appeared to be truly gracious, and excluded all doubts and fears reſpecting my ſtate. And I had often great enjoyment in contemplating divine truth, and in the exerciſes of heart which attended and were implied in theſe truths, independent of any determination, hope or thought that I was a chriſtian. And the exerciſes and experiences of my own heart, were the ground of my preaching, in

general, and led to thoſe paſſages of ſcripture and ſubjects which I choſe for my public diſcourſes.

A number of chriſtians, though not large, who were members of the church, were a comfort to me, and appeared to be pleaſed and edified under my miniſtry. I had, from time to time, ſome oppoſers of the doctrines which I preached. But being perſuaded, and *knowing* that they were the truths contained in divine revelation, this oppoſition, from whatever quarter, did not in the leaſt deter or diſcourage me from adhering to them and vindicating them publicly and in private. And this was the occaſion of my underſtanding them better, of enlarging my views of the extent and conſiſtency of the truths of chriſtianity; and more and more confirming and eſtabliſhing me in the knowledge and belief of them.

When I was diſmiſſed from Great-Barrington, I thought it not probable that I ſhould reſettle in the work of the miniſtry, ſince I could not think of ſettling any where, unleſs with a church, which were friendly to the doctrines and diſcipline which I believed and preached, and appeared, at leaſt a good number of them, to be *real chriſtians*. And it was not probable that ſuch a church could be found, ſeeing religion appeared generally to be ſunk to ſo low an ebb,

and the doctrines and diſcipline which I inculcated, were ſo much oppoſed and rejected.

I was then engaged in writing a reply to Mr. Mills entitled, *The true ſtate and character of the unregenerate, ſtripped of all miſrepreſentation and diſguiſe.* In attending to and finiſhing this I ſpent ſome months at home, and moſt of the time rode on Saturday to North Canaan, about twelve miles from my houſe, and preached to that people, they having no miniſter, and returned home on Monday. When that work was finiſhed, and put to preſs at New-Haven, I ſet out on a journey to Boſton, deſiring to viſit my chriſtian friends there, of whom I had a conſiderable number, with whom I had a particular acquaintance, and who had ſhown great and ſpecial kindneſs to me for a number of years. Doctor Lowell being then aged and ſick, unable to attend the work of the miniſtry, a number of the church and congregation of the *old ſouth*, were deſirous to have me introduced there. But ſome of the leading men in the church being oppoſed to it, exerted themſelves in oppoſition to it, and took meaſures effectually to prevent it.

While I was in Boſton, there came a man from Topſham, a town one hundred and fifty miles eaſt of Boſton, on Kennebec river; being ſent to get a miniſter to come and preach to tha people. Having been deſirous for ſometime to

get acquainted with that eaſtern country, of which I had heard much, I conſented to go, and arrived there the beginning of June. I found the ſettlement new; the people ignorant and generally ſtupid in matters of religion; and no church or profeſſors of religion in the town. The people, however, came pretty generally to hear me; and many came from the adjacent towns, there being but few miniſters in theſe parts. They profeſſed highly to approve of my preaching, and none appeared to oppoſe. When I had ſpent a few ſabbaths there, the committee came to me, and ſaid, the people appeared unanimous in deſiring me to ſtay with them; they therefore deſired that I would conſent to have the people collected in town meeting to ſee if they would invite me to ſettle among them, in which, without doubt, they would be unanimous. I told them that they were but a young ſettlement, and their lands in general were uncultivated: that as I had a wife and a number of children, and was ſo far advanced in life, I did not believe it my duty to move my family ſo far, and ſettle among them, in my time of life, and in their preſent circumſtances; therefore would not have them think of calling a meeting of the people, in order to invite me to ſettle with them: that I hoped they would find a *young man*, who might be willing to ſettle with them.*

* Monday June 12, 1769. Spent Saturday in faſting and prayer, had a variety of exerciſes, more ſtrong than com-

I then concluded in my own mind, that it would be my duty to live with my family at Great-Barrington, and cultivate my farm for a

mon, was in tears great part of the day; so that I was obliged to shut myself up, not fit to be seen. If ever I knew what it was, to cast myself upon Christ, I did so now. Sovereign grace was all my plea, and all my hope. I had unspeakable pleasure in thinking that in me, there was a proper foundation for the *greatest* exercise and display of sovereign grace; even in my infinite, distinguished guilt, vileness and misery: this afforded opportunity for the exercise of divine power, wisdom, and goodness, in all their infinite height and latitude. That in *me*, there was a *broad bottom*, for the trial of divine grace, on which it may have full scope, as it were, and erect the greatest monument, to the praise of the glory of God's grace to all eternity! My soul seemed to rejoice and exult in this, more, unspeakably more than in my own salvation, considered as separate from this. Yea, the latter, was as nothing of no account, and not worth asking for, in comparison with the former, or aside from that.

My exercises were uncommon, and remarkable in one respect, viz. in the quick succession of light and joy, and dejection and gloom. I was sometimes lifted up, and then soon cast down, and my exercises as it were obliterated.

The chief things I proposed to seek God for to day were, first, his direction and smiles, with regard to my future circumstances, and usefulness in the world, with respect to which, I have had a variety of exercises, which would fill a volume were they all recorded.

Secondly, For my christian friends.

Third'y, For the church of Christ, &c.

This morning awoke with the words of Christ in my mind "he that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him." I seemed to long to keep Christ's commandments, and thought the great one was to *love one another*. This led me when I was up, to read the 14th, 15th and 16th chapters of John. And oh, how full of sweet instruction are they! there is an additional, inexpressible sweetness in the bible now, which I never tasted before.

living, rather than to ſettle at Topsham, or any place like that; and felt reconciled to ſuch a plan, unleſs I ſhould have ſome better proſpect of ſettling in the miniſtry.

Saturday morning July 1. Purpoſe to ſpend this day in faſting and prayer. The day is to be ſpent in the following manner.

1. In attending to my ſins, and confeſſing them before God.

2. In praying for pardon and holineſs.

3. That God would make the path of duty plain before me, form me for his ſervice, and improve me in it.

4. In ſeeking mercies for my wife and children.

5. Praying for direction and aſſiſtance while with this people, that ſome good may be done here.

6. For my chriſtian friends, and kind benefactors.

7. For the church of Chriſt in general and for the world of mankind. Cloſe the day with thankſgiving.

When I firſt roſe this morning, read the ſeventy firſt Pſalm, with ſome exerciſes of heart and pleaſure. Many paſſages in it ſeemed applicable to my circumſtances; and I thought I could make them the language of my own heart. The imprecations on enemies, verſe, 13, 24, I could apply to inviſible enemies, the devils, and wicked men, conſidered as enemies to me, becauſe enemies to Chriſt, and ſo far as they are ſuch, they may be conſumed and deſtroyed. This is conſiſtent with their being converted and ſaved.

"Their feet are ſwift to ſhed blood, but how to do good they know not." This is the very character that I have been of, all my days. All ſin of omiſſion or commiſſion is ſhedding blood, it is miſchief, it is murder. In all my connections, I have been conſtantly guilty of omitting ſomething which I ought to have done for their good, or doing ſomething which tended to their hurt. I have miſſed ten thouſand opportunities to do good, and have not ſeen them till they were paſt, through the ſtupidity and wickedneſs of my heart. If I have ever deſired to do any good, it has been the effect of ſovereign grace.

I have been longing to get rid of ſin—the thought of living as I have, is dreadful. In this ſenſe I groan being burdened!

While I was in this ſituation, in the beginning of July, I received a letter from the committee of the firſt congregational church in

Wedneſday morning July 5. I have had a ſweet hour between nine and ten. Surely if the higheſt enjoyments on earth were all laid at my feet, to have them to all eternity without God, I would not give this hour's enjoyment for them all: Yea I would deſpiſe them. "It is good for me, to draw near to God." How ſwift, and how ſweetly do ideas paſs the mind, when it is in any meaſure in a right frame! It is impoſſible to expreſs all the thoughts and ideas, which have paſſed my mind in this hour on my knees before God! "There is none on earth that I deſire *beſides thee*," were words to which my ſoul did echo, and which I could eſpouſe with all my heart. *Beſides*, *thee*, that is aſide from thee, or without thee, and not in union with thee. I concluded with a ſolemn, and I hope *hearty* dedication of myſelf to God, believing that he could, and in a degree of confidence that he would, do more than I am able to aſk, or conceive.

Tueſday morning July 6. Roſe early this morning, and O aſtoniſhing that I may ſay it! have had a gracious, and moſt ſweet viſit from God. When I firſt attempted to bow before God, I felt myſelf, all at once in the preſence of the all ſeeing, infinitely wiſe, good, and every way moſt excellent and glorious God, who is wonderful in counſel and excellent in working. My ſoul adored and loved, and rejoiced in him. My ſoul was drawn out in ſtrong and ſweet exerciſes of love and praiſe, in a view of what God is in himſelf, and as manifeſted in his works. My ſoul would praiſe God, let him do what he would with me. I ſaid I will praiſe thee as long as I live, and bleſs thy name while I have a being. O, how did my heart rejoice and exult that there is *ſuch a God!* Words cannot utter it, nor can I write a thouſandth part of my exerciſes. It appeared ſomething wonderfully great, and inexpreſſibly deſirable, to be the inſtrument of bringing but one ſoul to the knowledge of this glorious God—of turning men from darkneſs to this marvellous light.

This morning, I have been led to view, and addreſs God, conſidered in his abſolute, divine perfection, and addreſs him in and through Chriſt, more than is common for me. I gene-

Newport, with an invitation to come and preach to them, with a view to ſettle with them, if they and I could agree.

rally, when I have the greateſt freedom at the throne of grace, ſpeak directly to Chriſt, as if he was in a ſenſe, the only object of worſhip, being God, and having all power in heaven and earth; but now it was otherwiſe.

I have ſometimes been troubled about this matter, and feared I had no right ideas of the father, and the ſon, of God and Chriſt, as I ſeemed not to know how to conceive of them, and addreſs them in my devotions. And have been hence led to aſk that I might know the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent; might have ideas, and conceptions of the glorious God and Saviour, agreeable, and anſwerable to the revelation he has made of himſelf. I have been more ſatisfied about it, this morning. I now believe that chriſtians may have different views with reſpect to this, and yet all be right. Sometimes their minds may be fixed on Chriſt, in whom dwells all the fullneſs of the Godhead; and, he may be more immediately the object of their adoration and worſhip, addreſſing him more directly, in which he is conſidered as ſet up by the father, and inveſted with all authority, and ſo comprehending *all that is called God.* At other times, they may have their minds more eſpecially fixed on the divine perfections, more abſolutely conſidered, yet not excluſively of Chriſt the mediator, and ſo more directly addreſs God over all bleſſed forever as exerciſing mercy through a mediator. And I believe different chriſtians may, in a ſtated way, differ in this reſpect in their view and addreſſes; and ſo be naturally led to talk of their exerciſes in a little different language; ſome ſpeaking more of God, others more of Chriſt. Our ideas are very ſcant at beſt, and we ſee but by parts and in a very partial manner. Hence when we view God in one attitude, if I may ſo expreſs it, his other relations and attitudes are more out of ſight, and leſs attended to. Yet when all our ideas and views, are compared together, they are perfectly uniform and conſiſtent, however various and different they may be.

3 o'clock. Have had a ſweet time in a walk in the woods. Had more hope and confidence before God, that I ſhould dwell with him forever in his kingdom, than I ever had be-

On the 10th July I left Topsham to go to Newport, by way of Boston and Providence, and arrived at Newport on Friday, July 21, and preached my first sermon there on Lord's day July 23.*

fore. Christ appeared great and glorious in redeeming his people from all iniquity; and even in redeeming one such soul as mine. I said, "I will praise thee forever" but this tribute appeared nothing. Then I said, "let all the angels praise thee for thy wonderful works to me." But this also appeared to be little, which led me to say, glorify thyself.

* Saturday September 30. Have been reading the 25th Psalm, with application to myself, have particularly attended to the 7th verse, where the Psalmist desires that God would give what he asks for, *for his goodness sake*, i. e. for the sake of the display of his goodness, as there must be a great and wonderful exercise and display of it in shewing mercy to him, who was so sinful, unworthy and illdeserving. This has been often my only refuge and plea. God shews mercy, *for his goodness sake*. This is a reason then why he should shew mercy to me, for his own goodness, cannot be more displayed and honored than in his being good to *me*. Blessed be God for this plea. I can now say, "pardon mine iniquity *for it is great*," verse 11.

November 10. Had a pleasant season this morning soon after I rose. It began with desires after the holy spirit. I saw this was all I wanted, all I could ask for: and pleaded the promise, "Ask, and ye shall receive." These words of Christ were on my mind, he that forsaketh house, or lands, &c. &c. I thought I had a heart to do this, and blessed Christ that he had given such a heart, as the greatest possible gift, infinitely greater than to have the whole world bestowed on me. I know I ought to be willing to suffer and die in the cause of truth, Oh that Christ would give me such a heart.

January 6, 1770. I have been walking in a rope walk, by myself. There I dedicated myself to Jesus Christ, with strength of heart and with unspeakable joy. I felt it to be an amazing privilege that I might be devoted to him, and that he would accept such an offering, I felt that I was under

I had not been at Newport more than five or six weeks before the church and congregation gave me a call to come and ſettle among them in the work of the miniſtry. I took the matter into conſideration, and went home to my family; and after a few weeks returned with a determina-

infinite obligations to this, and that the obligation is every way unbounded and that there is a peculiar happineſs in being thus obliged to him.

I have promiſed that by his grace I never will recall this dedication of myſelf to him, praying him to ſubdue every thing in my heart that oppoſes this conſecration, and that he would cauſe it to riſe higher and higher continually.

Saturday, near ſun ſet, January 13. Have had ſomē ſenſe of God's mercies to day, and ſome diſpoſition to praiſe him for his wonderful goodneſs. I have had a degree of confidence that I am devoted to God. I caſt myſelf, and all my concerns, the concerns of the church, and the world on him, with ſome degree of ſenſible reſignation and cheerfulneſs. Have had more ſtrong deſires than ever for the good of the congregation I am preaching to; and have been enabled to plead for it with God: My mouth has been filled with arguments and have had ſtrong deſires to be the inſtrument of building of it up.

Thurſday evening January 18. Have begun to write remarks upon Mr. Hart, and think it my duty to proſecute it as faſt as I can, ſuppoſing I am called to it by God. O that God would guide my heart, and my pen, through the whole.

Lord's day, January 21. Preached from Heb. ii. 3. How ſhall we eſcape &c. had freedom of ſpeech, and now feel calm and eaſy in my mind, as having in ſome meaſure declared the truth clearly and plainly, and recommended myſelf to men's conſciences in the ſight of God. I pray God to give his bleſſing to what has been ſaid, may it be the means of ſalvation to ſome poor ſoul

Saturday January 27. I ſeemed to have ſome ſenſe, to day, of God's goodneſs to me, it ſurpaſſes all expreſſion—all thought. Oh! how reaſonable, how comely is praiſe! Let me ſpend an eternity in this!

tion to comply with their invitation, as I found here a number who appeared to be excellent chriſtians, and the beſt regulated church that I had ſeen. But when I returned the committee came to me, and ſaid that in my abſence a number in the congregation had appeared diſſatisfied with my doctrines, and pains had been taken to promote prejudices againſt me. They therefore

Monday morning 4 o'clock. Have been worried about my preaching yeſterday. I believe it was the truth, but perhaps I had better not have preached it then, but I ſuſpect the devil has a hand in my uneaſineſs, and perplexity. Oh that Chriſt would deliver me from this roaring lion, and baffle and confound him! I know he will, and that however imprudent I am, and whatever advantage the devil gets by it at preſent, it ſhall all turn againſt him at laſt, and he ſhall be moſt effectually diſappointed and confounded. This is ſome comfort to me, I think; but it is unſpeakably dreadful to me, to think of giving him advantage by my imprudence and ſin. O Lord, in thy righteouſneſs deliver me from this ſubtle, powerful, cruel, unjuſt, injurious foe! He has no right to ſeek my ruin or the ruin of others. So far as I am againſt him and deſire to oppoſe him, and ſincerely cry to thee for deliverance, and his overthrow, I am in a *righteous cauſe*, O deliver me in thy righteouſneſs. Let him be blaſted forever!

Saturday evening February 10. Have had freedom, in thought, and prayer—have been enabled to caſt all my cares and burdens on God, as an infinitely full fountain, and the portion which my ſoul deſires. I have ſometimes ſeemed to have nothing to pray for; every thing is right, and juſt as I ſhould deſire to have it be. So long as Chriſt reigns and has every thing in his hands, I ſeem to have nothing to do, but praiſe.

It ſeems to me I have ſome higher ſenſe of what is meant by *living by faith on the ſon of God*, than I uſed to have. It is to make Chriſt ALL, to ſeek him for *every thing*, and live entirely on his expence and charges, having nothing of our own but emptineſs and poverty.

wiſhed that I would not give any anſwer to their call at preſent, but deſired me to continue to preach with them, by which they hoped the prejudices againſt me which had taken place would ſubſide. I complied with their deſire, and continued to preach to them till ſome time in March. My friends, and the committee then thought it was beſt to call the church and congregation together, to ſee if they would renew the call they had given me to ſettle with them, ſuppoſing they would be ſo unanimous that I ſhould conſent to ſtay. But when the leaders among thoſe who were diſſatisfied were informed of this proceeding, they exerted themſelves to get people to ſubſcribe in oppoſition to my ſettling among them; and when the congregation met, it appeared that there were more ſubſcribers againſt me, than there were for me. And the committee were deſired to inform me of the ſtate of the caſe.* This decided the affair which had

* Saturday, March 3. I think I have given up every point but this viz. that the path of duty may be made plain. If I have a call to leave Newport, and ſhall ſee it to be ſo, I think I can cheerfully go forth not knowing whether I am to go. And I have a p'eaſing hope and confidence that the way will be made p'ain, why ſhould I not truſt in that God for this, who has hitherto led me in a *plain path* eſpecially ever ſince I have had a heart to ſeek this in a more particular manner, making it my great petition, not caring ſo much what God called me to, if his call might be made clear and plain.

God's goodneſs has been increaſing upon me continually, and I will hope in him for I ſhall yet praiſe him. I will now praiſe him for all his wonderful goodneſs to me, which is in-

been long in ſuſpenſe, and the way was clear for my leaving Newport; and I felt a ſatisfaction that the path of duty was made ſo clear; and that my friends who had been ſo deſirous that I ſhould ſettle with them, would have no objection, but juſtify me in leaving them. And I had a degree of pleaſure, in the thought of re-

deed beyond all account. God has forgiven me from my youth unto this day, and why may I not truſt in him now? By his grace I will; on him I caſt myſelf, on him I rely for pardoning, and upholding mercy.

Lord's day evening, March 4. Had ſome uncommon exerciſes, this morning. I longed to be improved in the work of the miniſtry, that Chriſt would be with me and make me a bleſſing. I offered myſelf, deſiring that he would ſend me, ſince he had ſo much work to do in the world, and ſince he muſt employ unworthy, guilty ſinners. I offered myſelf, as ſuch an one: and ſince he glorified himſelf in improving ſuch, the more, unworthy and vile, the more he would be glorified. I therefore made this an argument that I might be improved, as I was the moſt guilty and vile, that could be found.

March 7. Feel calm, reſigned, and in ſome degree thankful. Oh! what conſolation is it that God reigns, and will take the beſt care of his own honor and intereſt! And what an infinite mercy, that I may hope, and be confident, that *this God*, is my God and Redeemer.

March 19. This day, I had news brought me that three men who had been moſt ſteady in oppoſing me, declared laſt evening, that they were ſorry they had oppoſed me, and they were now deſirous that I would ſtay and ſettle with them. They were brought to this, by my farewell ſermon. It is ſaid this ſermon has had greater effect than all my preaching before. Some who have thought it not beſt for me to ſtay, now appear zealous for my ſtaying. This is all wonderful. I deſire to ſtand ſtill and ſee the hand, the ſalvation of God! How greatly are my obligations increaſed to truſt in God, to live to him, and follow him in the dark! what matter for praiſe and gratitude.

turning home to my family, and living a private life on my farm. I therefore gave my anſwer to the people on the next ſabbath, and preached my farewell ſermon, expecting to go to my family that week. The congregation appeared attentive and ſolemn, and numbers were obſerved to weep.*

The next morning it was reported, where I lodged, that there appeared to be a revolution in the congregation: That ſeveral of the leaders in the oppoſition to me appeared to repent of what they had done, and ſaid that their conſciences accuſed them ſo ſeverely of their wickedneſs in what they had done, that they had little or no ſleep during the night; and were now determined to do all they could to prevent my leav-

* March 21. My mind has been full of comfort and joy this morning. Have had unſpeakably ſweet exerciſes, more than can be mentioned. The ſucceſs of my preaching, laſt ſabbath, is an inſtance of God's goodneſs, beyond any thing of the kind I ever experienced before! The walls of Jericho are fallen down by the blowing of ram's horns.

Friday March 23. The amazing inſtance of laſt ſabbath, dwells on my mind, though I fear it will not be improved by me as it ought. When the walls of Jericho fell flat before the people of Iſrael an accurſed thing was ſoon found in the camp. All was not dedicated to the Lord, and he was diſpleaſed. How juſtly diſpleaſed may he be, if this remarkable interpoſition of divine providence ſhould not be all conſecrated to his praiſe, and honor, Oh Lord, keep me back from coveting any thing of the ſpoils of this victory to myſelf, to be improved in the gratification of my pride and worldlineſs—This I am in the utmoſt danger of, and ſhall do worſe than Achan did, unleſs the Lord hold me back. O may all be conſecrated to thy glory.

ing them. And accordingly they went to thoſe whom they had influenced to ſubſcribe againſt my ſtaying, to perſuade them to retract. And that evening two or three of thoſe who had been at the head of the oppoſition to me, came to me, and confeſſed they had oppoſed my ſettling in the congregation, and influenced as many as they could againſt me. But now were convinced they had done wrong, and had taken pains to undo what they had done, and perſuade thoſe whom they had influenced to appear againſt my ſettling among them, to alter their ſentiments and conduct; that they now ſincerely deſired that I would ſtay and be their miniſter, &c. And I was at the ſame time informed that a number of the congregation, who had been in a great degree indifferent with regard to my ſtaying or going away, now appeared to be arouſed and engaged in favor of my ſtaying, and ſaid they would do all in their power to prevent my leaving them.

The next day the committee of the congregation applied to me, and ſaid that it appeared that thoſe who had been in oppoſition to my ſettlement among them, had retracted, and were now deſirous that I would ſtay with them; at leaſt, this was true of the moſt of them: And they believed, if the church and congregation were now to meet, they would be unanimous, or nearly ſo in renewing their former invitation

to me to ſettle with them in the miniſtry. They therefore deſired me to ſtay till the church and congregation could be called together, and renew their call, if they ſhould appear, when met, diſpoſed to do it. I conſented to this, and in the beginning of the next week the church and congregation met, and renewed their invitation to me to ſettle in the miniſtry with them. In this they were almoſt unanimous: but two or three of the congregation, diſſented, who had little or no influence in the congregation. And two or three of the church, choſe to be neuters, and vote neither for, nor againſt it.

Upon this I conſented to ſettle with them; and the committee of the church, agreed with me that the inſtalment ſhould be on the eleventh day of April; and to ſend to five churches to aſſiſt in the tranſaction. Which, accordingly, took place on April 11, 1770.

This event appeared to give ſatisfaction to all. And it was a time of peculiar gratitude and joy to my chriſtian friends, of whom there was a conſiderable number, who had ſteadily adhered to me, from my firſt acquaintance with them. And their pious affections, gratitude and joy were greatly heightened, by the dark and trying ſcene which preceded, in my being apparently rejected by the congregation, and conſequently determined to leave them; and the remarkable

manner in which a revolution took place in favor of my ſtaying, in which the hand of God was ſo conſpicuous. And it was a peculiar ſatisfaction to me, that God had in ſuch a manner opened the way for my ſettling here, and made the way of duty ſo plain; and that ſuch a number of very dear and excellent chriſtian friends were hereby ſo greatly gratified. And I conſidered myſelf to be under new and greater obligations to devote myſelf to the ſervice of Jeſus Chriſt, and to faithfulneſs to him, and the church and congregation to whom I now ſtood related as their paſtor and miniſter. And now, with ſhame I reflect upon my great deficiency. I ſaid I would be wiſe; but it has been far from me! O Lord, enter not into judgment with me; for I cannot ſtand, or anſwer. I fly to pardoning mercy, through the atonement of Chriſt, as my only refuge.

After I was thus ſettled, a conſiderable number were added to the church, which conſiſted, I think, of above one hundred members, male and female. I preached a lecture every Thurſday evening, which was well attended. I invited the young people to meet at my houſe, the males on one week and the females on the next; and ſo to continue to meet every week alternately, to have queſtions propoſed to them, which they were to anſwer, &c. Above forty young men ſubſcribed to an engagement to attend thoſe

meetings: and more than ſeventy young women After thoſe meetings were attended a conſiderable time, I propoſed that inſtead of theſe, which began to decline, I would attend a lecture every ſabbath evening at 6 o'clock in the meeting houſe, in which I would explain to the young people the ſhorter catechiſm, compoſed by the Aſſembly of Divines at Weſtminiſter. The young people to ſit by themſelves in the body of the meeting houſe below; and elder people who were diſpoſed to come, to ſit in the gallery, and the pews round the ſides of the houſe below. Theſe lectures were crouded; the congregation being larger then than at the meetings in the former part of the day, as numbers attended them from other congregations in town. And the young people appeared attentive, gave conſtant attendance, and behaved decently.

When I had gone through the catechiſm in this way, I undertook to give a *hiſtory of the bible*, in a courſe of lectures, endeavouring to join entertainment with inſtruction, and religious, profitable reflections, particularly applicable to young perſons. Theſe lectures were continued, and well attended till they were broken up by the war between Britain and America.

My continuance in peace and quietneſs in this ſituation and buſineſs, was not more than four

years; for by that time the Britiſh war came on, and it was thought beſt to ſend my family away to live on my farm at Great Barrington. I continued, however, in Newport, till the Britiſh took poſſeſſion of it in the latter end of the year 1776, when I left the town, and retired to my family, where I had been a few months before, and was inoculated, with my family for the ſmall pox, through which we were carried favourably.

I ſpent great part of the ſummer of 1777 at Newburyport, preaching to the congregation, which was then, I believe, the largeſt in America, being deſtitute by the then late death of Mr. Parſons. The next winter I ſpent at Canterbury in Connecticut, preaching to a deſtitute congregation there. And early in the ſpring I went to Stamford, to a deſtitute congregation, to which I preached during the ſummer of 1778. And in the fall of that year I left the old town of Stamford, and preached to a pariſh in the ſame town, then called Woodpecker-Ridge, now called North Stamford. Here I had my wife and one daughter with me, and continued here through the winter and ſummer of 1779, and the winter of 1780. In the ſpring of that year my wife and daughter went to Great Barrington and I went to Newport, the Britiſh having left it the fall before.

My church and congregation were greatly diminiſhed. Some had died, while the Britiſh were here, and many had removed into the country, who had not yet returned, and numbers were ſo ſettled in the country, that they were not likely to return ſoon, if ever. And thoſe who remained in town were ſo reduced in their worldly circumſtances, and dejection of their minds, by living ſo long under the tyranny of the Britiſh, that, excepting a very few, they had not courage enough to think or do much to preſerve the congregation from coming to nothing, by ſupporting the preaching of the goſpel. And it was a particular diſcouragement that the meeting houſe was ſo damaged, by being made a barrack for ſoldiers, that we could not meet in it. The bell was taken away by the Britiſh, when they left the town; and the pulpit and moſt of the inſide work was demoliſhed or taken away. And the few who were here had not courage or ability to repair it. I continued more than a year among them, while in this ſituation, having no ſupport, but what was given by a few generous friends: the congregation doing nothing, as a congregration, not having courage to attempt to have ſo much as a public contribution for a conſiderable time.

Having continued in this ſituation above a year, I thought it was not my duty, or even right to ſtay with them any longer, unleſs they

thought themſelves able, and were willing to ſupport me and my family: eſpecially as I had a preſſing invitation from the church and people at Middleborough to ſettle with them, where I and my family might be comfortably ſupported. I let the church and congregation know this, and told them that I was willing and deſirous to ſpend my life with them, if I could live among them with my family. But if this could not be, I ſhould think it my duty to leave them, and accept of the invitation I had elſewhere; or return home, and live on my farm. Upon this they had a meeting to ſee what could be done: at which meeting the people appeared ſo much concerned and engaged in the matter, and ſo deſirous to have me ſtay with them, and made a ſubſcription to that end ſo much more than was expected, that they ſent to me their deſire that I would ſtay with them, and ſend for my wife and family; as they hoped to be able to ſupport us comfortably.

I then concluded to ſtay at Newport; and my wife and one daughter came to live with me, as the reſt of my children were otherwiſe ſettled. There was no particular ſum mentioned which they would give; and thus I have lived ever ſince, receiving what has been given by a weekly contribution, and donations which particular friends have made. I have taken care not to run in debt for the neceſſaries of life; though fre-

quently if a dollar extraordinary had been called for, it would have rendered me a bankrupt. I have endeavoured to live as cheap and low as I could, and be comfortable, and anſwer the ends of living in my ſtation and buſineſs; and have experienced, through a courſe of years remarkable interpoſitions in divine providence, by which I have been ſupplied with the neceſſaries of life in ways unthought of; and have been preſerved from ſuffering, for want of food or raiment, whether I received leſs or more. When more than common has been given, calls for living have been equally greater; and when I have received but little, there has been a leſs demand for neceſſaries to ſupport the family, and leſs has been as ſufficient as more. This has made me often think of what is ſaid of the children of Iſrael, with reſpect to the manna on which they lived. "He that gathered much, had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack." I have been ſaved from anxiety about living: and have had a thouſand times leſs care and trouble about the world, than if I had a great abundance, and been in high life, attended with ſervants, equipage, much company, entertainments and high living. Being thus freed from worldly care and anxiety, endeavouring to caſt my care on God, with reſpect to living, not ſeeking *great things* in the world; and being in a great meaſure unconnected with the great and rich in the world, and gay, unprofita-

ble company, I have had more time to attend to my ſtudies, in which, and in a retired life, I have taken the greateſt pleaſure. And particularly have had leiſure to write my ſyſtem of divinity; which I hope will not prove u ſeleſs.

The church and congregation have been enabled, by divine providence, in ſome good meaſure to repair the meeting houſe; and do yet ſubſiſt. But they are ſo diminiſhed by deaths and removals; that the appearance now is, that when death ſhall remove me from them, which may be expected to be ſoon, they will be diſſolved as a church and congregation, unleſs there ſhould be an unexpected revolution in their diſpoſitions or circumſtances. But this I would leave with him, who knows what to do with me, with them, and with all things elſe.

As to my domeſtic affairs. I have had eight children: Five ſons and three daughters, all which lived to grow up; and all of them have been married, except my youngeſt ſon, who died in Maryland on the 26th February 1788, in the twenty fifth year of his age. My three daughters were married, and are now dead. The oldeſt left two ſons. The ſecond left a daughter, who now lives with me. The third left an infant ſon, who now lives with his father's parents in Vermont. My two oldeſt daughters were profeſſors of religion, and were hope-

fully real chriſtians. The youngeſt died in hope that ſhe was a chriſtian, and her appearance and converſation were ſuch in her laſt ſickneſs, that her friends who were with her and heard her converſe, had hope for her, that ſhe made a happy end. I have four ſons yet living. One of them, the oldeſt lives in Maryland, near Baltimore. Another, the third lives in the weſtern part of Virginia. I attempted to give him a public education, and he was a member of the college at Princeton two years or more; but want of health prevented his continuing there till he had a degree. My other two ſons live at Great Barrington.

My wife was attended with a ſcrofulous, ſlow conſumption for a great part of the laſt twenty years of her life; and a number of times appeared to be almoſt gone, and then would revive again and be better for a time. She indured great diſtreſs of body, almoſt conſtantly for years. In May, 1793, I went to Great Barrington with her, by water as far as Hudſon, hoping the journey, and living with her children in the country might be for her health and comfort. She bore her journey better than was feared, and appeared better when ſhe arrived there, than when ſhe ſet out; and continued better great part of the ſummer. But in the end of July and in Auguſt, ſhe grew worſe; and died on the laſt day of Auguſt 1793, in the ſixty eighth year of her age.

She was a profeſſor of religion, and I hope a real chriſtian. In the latter part of her life, under her bodily diſorders, which were very diſtreſſing, eſpecially at times, ſhe appeared to exerciſe chriſtian patience and reſignation; and to have a ſtedfaſt belief of the great truths of chriſtianity, and a ſenſe of their weight and importance.

After the death of my wife, I was left alone at Newport, as to relatives, not having the moſt diſtant relation, within many miles of that place.

On the 14th September 1794, I was married to Miſs Elizabeth Weſt, who was ſixteen or ſeventeen years younger than myſelf. She was born and educated in Boſton; but had lived in Newport a number of years. I have had a particular acquaintance with her for more than thirty years, whom I eſteemed as a chriſtian of uncommon diſcernment with reſpect to the doctrines of chriſtianity; and moſt ſincerely devoted to the ſervice of Chriſt. In our union in this neareſt relation, we have had the approbation of our chriſtian friends here and elſewhere, who have appeared to be pleaſed and gratified by it. Which has been an addition to our happineſs in this relation. I have thought myſelf greatly favoured, and peculiarly happy in finding ſuch a wife, who has been willing to come into this relation with me; and eſteem it

as one of the greateſt favours of my life to have ſuch a companion in my advanced years, in whoſe prudence, good family economy, friendſhip, and benevolent care I can confide; and who is to me the firſt object among creatures, of the love of eſteem, benevolence, complacency and gratitude.

My bodily conſtitution, I believe, has been much better, than moſt of thoſe who live a ſedentary life. In the former part of my life, indeed, from the twenty firſt to the thirty-fifth or fortieth year of my age, my conſtitution was rather ſlender and infirm; but not ſo as to prevent my attending to buſineſs and my ſtudy, as much or more than is common among miniſters. Since that time of life my conſtitution has been better, and I have enjoyed generally a good ſtate of bodily health; and have been able to ſtudy fourteen and frequently eighteen hours in a day, generally riſing at 4 o'clock in the morning, or between four and five; eſpecially in the winter ſeaſon. I have had ſeveral fits of ſickneſs, in which I have been brought very low, and have been thought by my friends to be near death. But theſe ill turns have not broken my conſtitution, but have appeared to be the means of my better health, as this has generally been the conſequence; and I now enjoy more bodily eaſe, health and ſtrength, than is common to men of my age. This, and every thing relating to my

life, even the moſt minute circumſtance, I know is ordered by God, to anſwer ſome wiſe and good end: And when he ſhall have no more to do for and by me in this world, he will take me out of it. How ſoon, and in what way this will be I know not. Nor have I any reaſon to be in the leaſt anxious about it. May I wiſely improve the gifts of heaven, and life and health, while I enjoy them, and be always ready to quit this life, whenever I ſhall be called to do it!

Of my perſonal religion, I have given ſome account already. I have never in the courſe of my life, ſince I firſt entertained a hope that I had been brought to the knowledge of the truth, given up my hope, and come to a ſettled concluſion that I had no grace; but my doubts have frequently roſe very high. Many times my exerciſes have been ſuch, as for a time to exclude all doubts. But I have been conſtantly conſcious that I have always fallen unſpeakably below what I ought to be, and what I hoped I ſhould be. My ſtrongeſt religious exerciſes, and higheſt enjoyments have taken place in my retirement and ſecret devotions; and in my public performances, praying and preaching have generally been very low; which I have ſometimes ſuſpected was an argument that my religion is not genuine. I know it is an argument againſt me, that I am very ſinfully defective in my ſocial and public religion! I have been frequently carried out in

ſecret in views of divine truth, and exerciſes, even to an ecſtaſy, while tears have flowed abundantly, with groanings and deſires truly unutterable. My religious emotions and exerciſes of ſoul in the view of the truths reſpecting God, and the Saviour, the way of ſalvation, my own evil character, &c. have been unſpeakably more lively and ſtrong, than any emotions and exerciſes I have ever experienced, reſpecting any worldly, temporal objects. I have loved retirement, and have never been comfortable when deprived of it; and have taken more pleaſure *alone*, than in any company: And have often choſen to ride alone, when on a journey, rather than in the beſt company. I have for a long courſe of years, even from my firſt entering on the work of the miniſtry, ſpent the laſt day of the week in retirement, and in faſting and prayer, unleſs interrupted by ſomething extraordinary; and have found great advantage by it. This I have practiced not as a burden and taſk, but as a privilege. I have felt and known myſelf to be a low and ſhameful chriſtian, if I were one; and have generally reflected on myſelf, character and conduct, as a chriſtian and miniſter of the goſpel, with a *painful ſhame* and ſelf condemnation, of which none can have conception but thoſe who have felt the ſame; knowing that in many things I offend, and in *every thing* have come unſpeakably ſhort of what I ought to do and be, conſidering my advantages,

mercies and obligations. My life and character and all my exercises are stained with such an awful degree of moral depravity and pollution, that I feel myself infinitely far from any righteousness or moral goodness that can recommend me to the favour of God; and if I am dealt with according to my moral character and desert, I must be cast off by God, and made miserable forever. I have no refuge but the righteousness, the infinite merit and worthiness of Christ. In *him* I hope; to him I come for pardon, justification and redemption from all iniquity, while I am willing to be considered as infinitely unworthy and ill deserving, even the greatest sinner that is, or ever was on earth: And know that if I am saved, it will be wholly owing to mere, infinite, sovereign grace; to eternal, electing love; for which I cannot give or conceive any reason but that which was given by the Son of God, "even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." I am truly ashamed of myself, that I have lived so long, and have made so little advances in mental religious attainments; and am, at the same time, conscious that I see but very little of my shameful depravity which has actually taken place, and now exists, and as it is viewed by the omniscient Saviour; and therefore my confessions, shame and humiliation, in his sight are inconsiderable and nothing, compared with my real shameful depravity and odiousness. And that petition well becomes me,

"God, be merciful to me a ſinner!" And how happy are they who can and do underſtandingly heartily and conſtantly make it! I have kept a journal at ſome ſeaſons of my life, in which ſome of my religious exerciſes are recorded more particularly than they are here deſcribed.

My preaching has always appeared to me as poor, low and miſerable, compared with what it ought to be; and frequently a ſenſe of my deficiencies in this has been very painful and diſcouraging; and I have felt often as if I muſt leave off, and never attempt any more; and commonly, if not always, a proſpect of preaching and when I have been entering upon it, has brought a peculiar burden on my mind. And many times, when I have been preaching, it has left a painful conſciouſneſs that I have come unſpeakably ſhort of what ought to be. And I have never wondered that my preaching has been attended with ſo little apparent good effect, ſince it has been ſo deficient every way. But few perſons have appeared to have been awakened and converted by means of my preaching. The moſt apparent good it has ever been the means of doing is the inſtruction, quickening and comfort of chriſtians. Many of this character, and eſpecially thoſe who have appeared moſt eminent in diſcerning and chriſtian experience, have highly approved of my preaching, which has been a great ſupport and encouragement to me;

though I have been often diſpoſed to attribute their ſatisfaction and approbation to their high reliſh for the truth, however poor and defective the delivery and exhibition of it may be. It has often given me pleaſure to look forward to the millennium, and conſider what excellent preaching will then take place; when the miniſters of the goſpel ſhall be full of light and holy zeal, and exhibit the important, amiable truths of chriſtianity, in their true connection, force and beauty: and their hearers full of ſenſibility and diſcerning, and in the exerciſe of a high reliſh for theſe, as the moſt exquiſitely ſweet, and nouriſhing food for their minds, will give a moſt pleaſing and ſolemn attention, while they are partaking of the higheſt and moſt delicious entertainment. How low, mean and unentertaining is the beſt preaching we now have; and how low the attention and enjoyment of the hearers, compared with that, of which we now have but a faint and very imperfect idea!

For forty years or more, ſince I entered on the work of the miniſtry, I have made it my practice to read a chapter in the bible, one in the forenoon, and the other in the afternoon; and to ſay ſomething on the chapter by way of explanation, and improvement, in which I have not confined myſelf, as to the time I ſhould ſpend upon it, but have ſaid more or leſs, as I thought would be moſt inſtructive and edifying. In or-

der to do this in the beſt manner I could,' I have attended to the chapters to be read, before the ſabbath, and conſulted thoſe expoſitors which were within my reach; which has generally coſt me as much time and pains, as the ſtudying of my ſermons. And I have thought this was as profitable part of the public exerciſes, as preaching, which has not been neglected by thus reading and expounding. And I have had ſatisfactory evidence that the hearers in general have been pleaſed with, and thought themſelves moſt edified by this practice. And I have for ſome years paſt neglected to preach a ſermon, in the common way, in the forenoon, and, inſtead of it, have expounded and improved the chapter which comes in courſe in the new teſtament. And this, ſo far as I can learn, has been as acceptable to the congregation in general, as preaching from one particular text, if not more ſo.

I have not been confined to my notes in preaching, except for a ſhort time, when I firſt began; and have not generally written my ſermons in full length; but only the heads of them, and ſome ſhort hints to ſuggeſt ideas, which were to be mentioned under the general heads. I do not, however, recommend this as the beſt method. I think it would be beſt, in general, to write all the ſermon, and commit it to memory, with an allowance to deviate in ſome inſtances from what has been written, and to add to it, what may

be ſuggeſted to the mind in the delivery. If this practice be diligently followed for a time, the preacher, it is expected, will be able not only to preach without notes, but his mind will be ſo furniſhed with the knowledge of divinity that he will be able to preach without writing his ſermons.

I have not written the ſermons which I have preached for ſome years paſt. I have written in this time more on the various ſubjects of divinity, than in former years; but not in the form of ſermons. And I ſuppoſe that a miniſter cannot improve his mind in the beſt manner, and make proper advances in the knowledge of divinity, unleſs he uſes himſelf to write on divine ſubjects.

I am ſenſible that I was greatly deficient and negligent in the former part of my life in my attention to language and taking pains to obtain a good delivery, which occaſioned a very bad and diſagreeable delivery, and rendered me not a good, but a bad ſpeaker; eſpecially in the former part of my miniſtry; though ſince for above thirty years I have made ſome improvement in my delivery, by paying more attention to it, and to language, by which I have been in a great meaſure cured of ſome of my bad habits, contracted through inattention, and the want of a friend to point them out to me, and admoniſh

me. When I firſt began to preach, my mind was inquiring after truth; and this pleaſed and ſatisfied me where ever I could find it, without attending much to the manner or the language by which it was conveyed to my mind. And I took it for granted that this was the caſe with others. This led me to enquire after *truth* and in my ſermons to convey it to others, without attending properly to the manner and the language in which it was communicated. So that while, I truſt, I made ſome proficiency in the knowledge of the truth, I was careleſs as to the manner of communicating it, and contracted theſe bad habits, with reſpect to this, which it was not eaſy, if poſſible, to get wholly rid of, when I became ſenſible of my miſtake, and was convinced of the importance of ſtudying good language and a proper delivery.

If I have been the mean of doing any good, and of promoting the true intereſt of the church, or kingdom of Chriſt; by detecting error and diſplaying and vindicating the truth, I believe it has been principally by my writings and publications, which involved me, for a number of years, in diſputes, as there were ſeveral miniſters who wrote againſt what I had advanced in ſome of my publications, whom I anſwered; and I believe truth has gained great advantage hereby.

In the year 1759 I publiſhed three ſermons

from Romans iii. 5, 6, 7, 8. entitled "Sin, through divine interpoſition, an advantage to the univerſe, and yet this no excuſe for ſin or encouragement to it." This title was ſo ſhocking to many, that they would read no farther. And many who read the ſermons, were far from falling in with the ſentiment advanced. But few had ſtudied the point and it was a new doctrine to many. Yet no one undertook publicly to confute it. And many who read the ſermons were convinced of the truth exhibited in them; and thought the reaſoning from ſcripture to be unanſwerable, and the ſentiments which were advanced to be important and uſeful. And this conviction has been ſpreading from that time, to this, and the moſt who are ſerious and attentive, whether miniſters or others, approve of this publication, ſo far as I can judge. And light on this ſubject has been, and ſtill is increaſing. Theſe ſermons had a ſecond edition in Boſton, in the year 1773. And about the ſame time another edition of them was printed in Edinburgh, Scotland.

In the year 1765, I publiſhed a book of one hundred and forty-five pages, octavo, the title of which was, "An inquiry concerning the promiſes of the goſpel: Whether any of them are made to the exerciſes and doings of perſons in an unregenerate ſtate. Containing remarks on two ſermons, publiſhed by Doctor Mayhew

of Boſton." In theſe ſermons Doctor Mayhew attempted to prove that there are promiſes to the doings of the unregenerate. In the tenth and laſt ſection of this book I attempted to ſhew what is the deſign and end of the uſe of means, with reſpect to the unregenerate, in order to their ſalvation; where I obſerved, that the end was not to render the unregenerate better or leſs ſinful while they continued unregenerate: For perſons while they continued to reject the goſpel, which all the unregenerate did, under all the means uſed with them, and with all the light and conviction they might have, did not become leſs ſinners, but greater and more guilty whatever external reformation might take place. Though this truth had been at leaſt implicitly aſſerted in the writings of many calviniſts, and in their preaching, yet it had not been ſo explicitly and particularly aſſerted and explained by calviniſtic writers and preachers in general; and many, in contradiction to what they at other times ſaid, and to true calviniſm, ſaid things which implied the contrary, and repreſented the convinced and externally reformed ſinner, though unregenerate, and continuing to reject the goſpel, as a much leſs ſinner, and leſs guilty than the unawakened, ſecure ſinner. Therefore, though Doctor Mayhew, who was not a calviniſt, made no reply to my remarks on his ſermons, yet many profeſſed calviniſts thought the ſentiment I had advanced was contrary to the truth,

and of a very bad tendency. Among the reſt, Mr. Mills of Ripton in Connecticut was greatly alarmed; and thought the doctrine I had publiſhed was new and ſtrange, contrary to the bible, and tended to great miſchief. He therefore thought it his duty to oppoſe, and attempt to confute me, and publiſhed a book of one hundred and twenty-four pages againſt me, in the year 1767.

In 1768, a ſermon which I preached in the old ſouth meeting-houſe in Boſton was publiſhed at the deſire of a number of the hearers. The title of it is, "The importance and neceſſity of chriſtians conſidering Jeſus Chriſt in the extent of his high and glorious character." The text Hebrews iii. 1. It was compoſed with a deſign to preach it in Boſton, as I expected ſoon to go there, under a conviction that the doctrine of the divinity of Chriſt was much neglected, if not diſbelieved by a number of the miniſters in Boſton

In the ſame year I publiſhed two ſermons, one from Romans vii. 7. the other from John i. 13. containing ſixty-five pages in a ſmall comprehenſive type. A ſecond edition of theſe ſermons was printed in 1793.

In the year 1769 I publiſhed my anſwer to Mr. Mills of one hundred eighty four pages, octavo, on a ſmall comprehenſive type. The following

was the title of it. "The true ſtate and character of the unregenerate, ſtripped of all miſrepreſentation and diſguiſe." I believe this book, with what was afterwards publiſhed on the ſame ſubject, was the means of ſpreading and giving much light and conviction, with reſpect to the real character and doings of the unregenerate; and has in a great meaſure put a ſtop to exhorting the unregenerate to do duty in order to obtain regeneration, which was very common among preachers before that time. Some of my friends thought I treated Mr. Mills with too much ſeverity, in taking pains to ſhow how many ſelf-contradictions were to be found in his writings, and to diſcover his weakneſs, &c. ſince I, as well as others, believed he was a good man, and had done much good, and the oppoſition he had made to me was more owing to his weakneſs and his old age, and his ſpeculative error, than to his oppoſition of heart to the truth. And I believe there is ſomething of this kind, which ought, all things conſidered, to be left out, or otherwiſe expreſſed; though I had no perception of it in the time of it; but thought I was conſcientiouſly careful to leave out all perſonal reflections and every thing which was not neceſſary in the beſt manner to expoſe error and vindicate the truth. But how deceitful is the heart! Who can underſtand his errors!

In the latter end of the year 1769, or beginning

of 1770, Mr. William Hart of Saybrook publiſhed a dialogue, under the following title, "Brief remarks on a number of falſe poſitions, and dangerous errors, which are ſpreading in the country; collected out of ſundry diſcourſes lately publiſhed, wrote by Doctor Whitaker and Mr. Hopkins." And ſoon after there was a ſmall pamphlet publiſhed, which was doubtleſs written by the ſame Mr. Hart, which was written in a ſarcaſtical way, without argument or reaſon, in which the doctrines I, and others who agreed with me, had publiſhed were miſrepreſented; attempting to ſet them in a ridiculous light. And with a particular deſign, as it appeared, to diſgrace me before the public, he called them *Hopkintonian* doctrines. This is the original of this epithet. And ſince that time all who embrace the calviniſtic doctrines which were publiſhed by Preſident Edwards, Doctor Bellamy, Doctor Weſt of Stockbridge, and myſelf, have been called *Hopkintonians*, or *Hopkinſians*. Thus I am become the head of a denomination, who have ſince greatly increaſed, and in which thouſands are included, and a large number of miniſters, who, I believe are the moſt ſound, conſiſtent and thorough calviniſts; and who in general ſuſtain as good a character, as to their morality, preaching and perſonal religion, as any ſet of clergymen whatever: and are moſt popular where there appears to be moſt attention to religion: And, at the ſame time, are moſt

hated, oppoſed and ſpoken againſt, by arminians, deiſts, and perſons who appear to have no religion. And I believe, though this denomination or name originated from no ſuch deſign, that it has proved an advantage to truth and true religion, as it has given opportunity and been the occaſion of collecting thoſe who embrace the ſcheme of chriſtianity exhibited in the foremen-tioned publications and ranking them under one ſtandard. It has excited the attention and promoted enquiry into the principles and doctrines which are embraced and held by thoſe of this denomination, by which light and conviction have been ſpread and propagated.

Theſe writings of Mr. Hart's were publiſhed, while I was at Newport, preaching on probation. Pains were taken to ſend and ſpread them there, by thoſe who were not friendly to my ſentiments, and conſequently not friendly to me, and to my ſettling in the firſt congregational church in Newport; with a view, no doubt, to prejudice the people of that church and congregation againſt me. And it had this effect, in ſome meaſure for a time; but was ſoon counteracted and loſt the influence deſigned; and probably had a contrary effect in the iſſue.

This occaſioned my writing remarks on thoſe publications; eſpecially the dialogue, with the following title. "Animadverſions on Mr.

Hart's late dialogue, in a letter to a friend." This was publiſhed in the ſpring of 1770, containing only thirty one pages. In which I did not attempt particularly to vindicate the doctrines I had publiſhed; but rather to ſhow the unfairneſs and diſingenuity of Mr. Hart, and his falſehoods, and ſelf-contradictions, in what he had written.

Mr. Mills did not make any reply to my anſwer to him. But as I had aſſerted in that anſwer, that unregenerate ſinners do not do any duty, Mr. Hemmenway, (now Doctor) having before publiſhed eight ſermons to eſtabliſh the contrary, wrote a book of one hundred twenty ſeven pages, octavo, againſt me and my poſition, and publiſhed it in the year 1772. The year before, the above mentioned Mr. Hart, wrote a pamphlet againſt Preſident Edwards' Diſſertation on the nature of true virtue, in which he repeatedly mentioned my name and writings with diſapprobation. And about the ſame time, Mr. Moſes Mather (now Doctor) publiſhed a piece in which he condemned ſentiments found in Preſident Edwards', Doctor Bellamy's and my writings.

As I was ſenſible the difference between me and theſe authors originated in our different ideas of the nature of true holineſs, in 1773 I publiſhed a book of two hundred twenty pages, octavo, containing, "An inquiry into the nature

of true holineſs; with an appendix," in which I anſwered the publications above mentioned. That on the nature of true holineſs had a ſecond edition of one thouſand five hundred copies, in the year 1791. Mr. Hart and Doctor Mather wrote no more. But Doctor Hemmenway publiſhed remarks on my anſwer to him, in 1774, containing one hundred ſixty ſix pages, octavo. But as little or nothing was in this added to what was contained in his firſt book, and it contained perſonal reflections, and too much heat and haughtineſs; all which he confeſſed to me afterwards in a perſonal interview, I did not think it worth while to take any public notice of it. And I believe it was not much read, and had but little influence on the minds of any.

In the year 1776 I publiſhed, "A dialogue concerning the ſlavery of the Africans; ſhewing it to be the duty and intereſt of the American ſtates to emancipate all their African ſlaves." Dedicated to the honorable continental congreſs. To which I did not ſet my name. It was reprinted by the Abolition Society in New York in 1785, to which is prefixed the inſtitution of that Society. To this edition I added an appendix.

In the year 1783 I publiſhed "An enquiry concerning the future ſtate of thoſe who die in their ſins." In which I attempted to ſhow from

ſcripture, that the puniſhment of ſuch will be without end; to give the reaſon of it and anſwer objections. It contains near four hundred pages, octavo. I publiſhed that book at that time, becauſe the doctrine of univerſal ſalvation, was preached and propagated by a number, and began to ſpread in the country.

In the year 1793 was publiſhed my "Syſtem of doctrines contained in divine revelation, explained and defended, ſhewing their conſiſtence and connection with each other. To which is added, a treatiſe on the Millennium," in two large octavo volumes. The whole containing one thouſand two hundred forty four pages. Sold to ſubſcribers at three dollars a ſet. There was a large ſubſcription for this work of above one thouſand two hundred. I ſold the copy right to the printers for nine hundred dollars, which has been a help to me, in the low, deranged ſtate of my church and congregation; without which I know not how I ſhould have ſubſiſted. I had no expectation of getting a penny by the publication, when I began, and while I was preparing it for the preſs, nor had the leaſt view or thought of it. I was about ten years compoſing and preparing it for the preſs. It has been a laborious work to me, which I conſider as the greateſt public ſervice that I have ever done. It has met with more general and better acceptation by far, than

I expected, both in America and Europe; and no one has undertaken to anſwer it; though ſome curſory remarks have been made upon ſome parts of it, by way of objection; which, I believe, will not have much, if any influence to prevent the credit and uſefulneſs of it.

I have lately been writing the life of Miſs Suſannah Anthony, who died in the year 1791, conſiſting chiefly in extracts from her writings. It is gone to preſs, and I expect will be printed in a few months. She was an eminent and extraordinary chriſtian. And I think it a great favor to have the particular acquaintance I have had with her; and to have enjoyed her friendſhip and prayers for a number of years. I have pleaſure in the proſpect of promoting her uſefulneſs, after her death, and mine, by publiſhing her life, and a ſmall part of her writings. It now appears to me moſt probable that this is the laſt publication I ſhall be concerned in; except ſome ſhort eſſays which I may prepare for the Theological Magazine, which is now printed once in two months, by Mr. Davis in New-York.

About forty years ago there were but few, perhaps not more than four or five who eſpouſed the ſentiments, which ſince have been called *Edwardean*, and *new divinity*, and ſince, after ſome improvement was made upon them, *Hop-*

kintonian, or *Hopkinſian* ſentiments. But theſe ſentiments have ſo ſpread ſince that time among miniſters, eſpecially thoſe who have ſince come on the ſtage, that there are now more than one hundred in the miniſtry who eſpouſe the ſame ſentiments, in the United States of America. And the number appears to be faſt increaſing, and theſe ſentiments appear to be coming more and more into credit, and are better underſtood, and the odium which was caſt on them and thoſe who preached them, is greatly ſubſided.

This appears to me to be favourable to the cauſe of truth, and of Jeſus Chriſt and to be aſcribed to his power and grace, and is matter of great encouragement, in the midſt of the ſpread of error and deluſion, of infidelity, and all manner of vice and wickedneſs. And ſo far as I have been made a mean and inſtrument, of this by my writings, preaching and converſation, I have reaſon to rejoice and be thankful, while all is to be aſcribed to the ſovereign grace of the Redeemer. And I have particular reaſon to be thankful and rejoice that I have been the means of the converſion of more than one, who are now in the miniſtry, which they themſelves think is a fact; and of enlightening and removing the prejudices of others, who were before in a great meaſure blind to thoſe truths, which they now ſee to be evident and important. May I not re-

joice in this? And may I not hope "to rejoice in the day of Chriſt, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain?" May God have all the glory, Amen.

N. B. I finiſhed writing the foregoing ſketches of my life on the 21ſt day of July 1796.

This is an addition to the former ſketches of my life finiſhed July 21, 1796, *having lived to this day, December* 16, 1799.

SOON after I had finiſhed the foregoing ſketches, Mrs. Oſborn died, and left all her manuſcripts in my hands, with a deſire that I would make that uſe of them that I thought proper. And it was thought beſt to publiſh memoirs of her life, conſiſting chiefly in extracts from her writings, which were many. This made it neceſſary to read all her manuſcripts which filled above forty volumes of conſiderable bigneſs; in order to extract for publication what ſhould be thought neceſſary, in order to be moſt uſeful. On this, and in tranſcribing for the preſs I employed all my ſpare time for a year or more. It makes a volume in print of near four hundred pages.

I conſider it as a great and peculiar favor of the head of the church, that he has, in his providence, given me opportunity to publiſh the lives

of Mrs. Oſborn and Miſs Anthony, who were, in my judgment, the moſt eminent female chriſtians with whom I have had any acquaintance. The public and even chriſtians, who never were acquainted with them, will not, by reading what is publiſhed of them, have a full and adequate idea of their excellent character. I think it a great happineſs to have been intimately acquainted with them for near thirty years, and to enjoy their friendſhip and prayers. I hope that what is publiſhed of them will be of great benefit to the church not only in this generation, but in ages yet to come.

On the tenth of laſt January I was ſuddenly ſeized with a paralytic ſtroke, which affected my right ſide, and rendered my limbs of that ſide in a great meaſure uſeleſs, and much affected my ſpeech; but was attended with little or no pain; and the exerciſe of my reaſon and mental faculties was not in the leaſt affected. This appeared to threaten my ſpeedy diſſolution in my view and in the view of my friends, either by a greater and more deadly ſtroke, or ſome other way. To be ſure I ſeaſonably conſidered it as a warning to be ready for death. I felt that God had laid his hand lightly upon me, and that the affliction was attended with much tender mercy; and was reſigned and thankful. For a ſhort time at firſt, my mind was dark, and I ſeemed to myſelf to be in a meaſure ſhut out from the

ſenſible preſence of God and the Saviour: but ſoon I was led to a view and ſenſe of Jeſus Chriſt, as exalted to the throne of the univerſe, having all power in heaven and earth, cloathed with infinite power, wiſdom, rectitude and goodneſs, governing the world and ordering every event, the leaſt and greateſt, as it ſhall be moſt for his glory, and the greateſt general good; having mercy on whom he will have mercy, and hardening whom he will; and ſhowing mercy to every one, to whom he can do it, conſiſtently with wiſdom and goodneſs: That is, conſiſtently with the greateſt diſplay of his character and perfections, and the higheſt happineſs of the creation: and that all this, and every thing and event and circumſtance were determined and fixed from eternity, by eternal unerring wiſdom, righteouſneſs and goodneſs. In this view the Saviour appeared infinitely great and important, and divinely worthy and amiable. I felt myſelf and all creatures and things to be in his hands, and was pleaſed and rejoiced in this; knowing that every thing was ordered and conducted in the wiſeſt and beſt poſſible manner, ſo as to anſwer the beſt and moſt deſirable ends; that the Saviour would injure none, fulfil all his promiſes to a tittle, and accompliſh all his deſigns in the beſt time and the moſt deſirable and perfect manner: ſo that all is well, in the beſt and moſt deſirable ſituation that poſſibly can be. In a belief and ſenſe of this, and more, which cannot

be expreſſed, my ſoul was full of comfort and joy, ſaying "the Lord Jeſus Chriſt reigns, let the earth rejoice. Our God is in the heavens he hath done, doth, and will do whatſoever he pleaſeth."

In theſe pleaſing and comfortable views and exerciſes I had no particular attention to or thought of myſelf, whether I were a chriſtian and ſhould be ſaved or not. But my comfort and joy were derived from, or rather conſiſted in a view and ſenſe of the excellent, glorious character of Chriſt, in whoſe hands I and all things were, and who would order and diſpoſe of things concerning me and all men and creatures, ſo as in the higheſt degree to promote his glory, or the glory of God, which is the ſame; and effect the greateſt general good or happineſs, or the wiſeſt and beſt ends. In this view my heart ſaid, with ſtrong emotions, and the moſt pleaſing ſenſations, Amen! "Thy will be done!" without knowing or conſidering, what his will was concerning me. Had I reflected judiciouſly on my own exerciſes, I might have rationally judged them to be agreeable to the truth, and an evidence that I was a friend to Chriſt; but I did not ſo reflect as to make this concluſion. This view and ſenſe of things ſtill abides with me, but at different times in a higher and lower degree; but not ſo that I can infer from it, without heſitation, that I am a real chriſtian, and

ſhall be ſaved. My views and exerciſes appear to me, ſo much below the truth, and ſo inconſtant that, ſometimes, I doubt of their reality, or of their being real chriſtian exerciſes: and I have ſuch a deceitful heart, that I fear deluſion; though at times all doubts ſubſide. My perſon and whole intereſt in time and to eternity is, compared with the grand whole, the glory of God, and the beſt intereſt of his kingdom, ſo ſmall and inconſiderable, that when I have the latter in a ſenſible view, the former ſinks into a mere ſpeck or nothing, and is almoſt wholly overlooked and forgotten, and the language of my heart is, "Let God be glorified by all, and the beſt intereſt of his kingdom be ſecured and promoted, let what will become of me and my intereſt!" And while I ſee the former grand intereſt is ſecure, and will be in the beſt manner promoted, I am ſatisfied and rejoice. And this ſo engroſſes my thoughts and reflections, that I do not attend to the intereſt of any individual perſon, my own or any one elſe, ſo as to excite any ſenſible joy or ſorrow, hope or fear; the intereſt of ſuch individual being overlooked as not worthy of any regard, in compariſon with the grand intereſt, of the whole: This ſo impreſſes the mind and fills it, as to exclude the other.

But as my mind cannot have a view of all objects with equal clearneſs and attention, at one and the ſame time, but different objects, are

more attended to, and make a greater impreſſion at ſome times than at others, ſo when I attend more particularly to my own ſtate and intereſt, I naturally reflect upon the views and affections and enjoyments I have experienced in attending to the perſon, character and works of Chriſt, and the greatneſs, glory and happineſs of his kingdom; and the inference ſeems to be plain, that I am a friend to theſe objects: but I am not able always, if at any time, to ſee the truth of this conſequence with clearneſs and certainty. When the clearneſs and ſenſibility of theſe views and exerciſes in a meaſure ſubſide, and I attend more to my own character; and my depravity, ſtupidity, unbelief, and the evil and deceitfulneſs of my heart riſe into view, I am diſpoſed to call in queſtion my own good eſtate, and to ſuſpect that my exerciſes fall ſhort of real chriſtianity: yet maintaining a hope that this is not the caſe, which is ſometimes weaker and ſometimes ſtronger; and, frequently for a ſhort ſpace, riſes ſo high as to exclude doubting: but even then, though this excites gratitude, it does not raiſe my comfort and joy to that degree, as does the direct view of the character of Chriſt and his kingdom, above-mentioned, without any particular attention to my own character and perſonal intereſt. When my doubts and fears prevail moſt, reſpecting my perſonal union to Chriſt, and I attend particularly to my perſonal concerns and intereſt, it appears, when conſid-

ered by itſelf to be beyond all conception, and infinitely great, which I feel to be wholly in the hands of Chriſt, to be determined by him whether I ſhall be happy or miſerable forever. And this is ſo far from being diſagreeable to me, that I am highly pleaſed with it, and would not have it otherwiſe on any conſideration whatever. I feel that I am in the beſt hands, and, in this reſpect, in the beſt ſituation, that I poſſibly could be in. He certainly will not injure me in any reſpect, or in the leaſt degree. He is infinitely wiſe, good and merciful, and knows what is moſt for his own glory, and the higheſt good and happineſs of his kingdom; and, can and will certainly ſave me and every one elſe with whom I have any connection, if it may be conſiſtent with his glory and the greateſt happineſs of his kingdom, or conſiſtent with wiſdom and goodneſs, which is the ſame: And I cannot ſo much as wiſh or have the leaſt deſire to be ſaved on any other ſuppoſition; that is, if this be inconſiſtent with infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, and contrary to the greateſt good and glory of Chriſt and his kingdom: and feel that it would be awful impiety and rebellion to aſk for ſalvation on any other ſuppoſition.

But when I reflect on the dreadfulneſs of being caſt away for ever by Chriſt, to ſuffer the juſt deſert of my ſins, feeling the ſtrokes and tokens of his righteous anger and vengeance; and being

given up to evil luſts to join with the devil and exiſt eternally on his ſide an enemy to Chriſt and his kingdom, my ſoul recoils, and feels this to be intolerable! then I fly to Chriſt and his atonement, and caſt myſelf down at his feet, to diſpoſe of me as he pleaſes; yet hoping and crying for mercy, Oh! be merciful to me a ſinner. Which is accompanied with a number of various exerciſes which cannot be eaſily deſcribed.

And when I reflect on theſe exerciſes they appear to me to be conſiſtent with chriſtianity, and an evidence of real friendſhip to Chriſt: and I am ſenſible that if another perſon ſhould relate to me ſuch views and exerciſes as experienced by him, I ſhould think them an evidence that he was a real chriſtian. Yet I often greatly doubt of my being a true chriſtian; eſpecially when I have ſome more clear view and ſenſe of my barren and ſinful life, and attend particularly to that.

Theſe are ſome of my daily various exerciſes, in all which I always maintain a hope that I am a chriſtian, which ſometimes excludes all doubt, being conſtantly aſſured of the truth of the goſpel, that this is a revelation of the only true God, and of eternal life; and, that the truths which I have preached as contained in the goſpel, are indeed the truths of God, and ſufficient to ſupport and comfort a chriſtian in the near view of

death and eternity, and under all the afflictions of this life. And I live in the conſtant aſſurance of the truth of the doctrine of the decrees of God, and of his univerſal and particular providence directing every event, and every thing which comes to paſs, and exerciſing abſolute ſovereignty in his dealing with men; without which I could have no ſupport and comfort. And my chief comfort and joy, does not conſiſt in or ariſe from an aſſurance or hope that I ſhall be ſaved; but in a view and ſenſe of the perfections and glory of Chriſt, his power, wiſdom and goodneſs, reigning and ordering all things for the glory of God and the greateſt good of his kingdom. And this is accompanied with an experimental aſſurance, that the exerciſes of true religion are wholly diſintereſted, and in direct oppoſition to all ſelfiſhneſs: a doctrine which I have endeavoured to maintain and inculcate for many years.

When I was firſt taken with this diſorder, and for moſt of the time ſince, I have had little or no ſenſible deſire of recovering, and was not inclined ſo much as to aſk for it; my mind rather reluctated at the thought of recovering ſo as to preach after the poor dull way in which I had hitherto preached, and with as little ſucceſs. But God has been pleaſed to recover me, ſo that I have been able to attend public worſhip and preach for ſeveral months paſt; and, I do not

feel that preaching hurts me, or aggravates my diſorder; which encourages me to proceed: but with many and great diſcouragements from my own great deficiencies, and the want of a proper attention, apparent in the congregation in general. But Chriſt will anſwer his own ends by me, and continue me in the world, and take me out of it in the beſt time and manner, ſo as beſt to anſwer theſe ends: and in this I daily acquieſce and rejoice. Amen!

January 10, 1800. As I think it may be uſeful particularly to attend to, and record thoſe exerciſes, which appear to me to be an evidence that I am a real chriſtian, and at times, are ſatisfactory and remove all doubt, when they are more ſtrong and ſenſible, and I reflect upon them with more particular attention, and they appear real and certain.—And, on the contrary, mention and deſcribe thoſe things which I find in myſelf which appear againſt me as evidences that I am not a chriſtian, and ſometimes are the ground of ſtrong ſuſpicion and doubt whether I am a real friend to Chriſt.

The former of theſe may be repreſented in the following particulars.

1. I have been ſo far convinced of my ſins and reproved for them, that I know that I am infinitely guilty, and deſerve eternal deſtruction and

miſery: that God would be juſt, and I ſhould have no reaſon to complain, if he ſhould puniſh me forever, with aggravated torments. This conviction is abiding and increaſing, while I heartily approve of the law of God which curſes the tranſgreſſor, as holy juſt and good. This conviction and ſenſe of the evil of ſin, and of my depravity and ſinfulneſs, riſes much higher ſometimes than others; but I am never diſpoſed to caſt it off or doubt the truth of it, but it is fixed on my mind, and when I have the greateſt ſenſe of it, I know that I ſee but little of what it really is in the ſight of God, that the number of my ſins and the magnitude and aggravations of each one are infinitely beyond my comprehenſion, and are known perfectly to God alone. That I am wholly and beyond expreſſion depraved and ſinful naturally, being infinitely far from any moral goodneſs to recommend me to the mercy and favour of God: and that if my heart be changed ſo as to exerciſe holineſs in any degree, yet this is ſo defective, and attended with ſo much moral defilement and ſin, that all taken together, it is worſe than nothing, and affords matter of condemnation, and is infinitely far from deſerving any good or favour. And if I were wholly recovered from my depravity and were made perfectly holy, this would be ſo infinitely overbalanced by the guilt of my ſins, that it could not be reckoned in my favour, ſo as to procure the pardon of my ſins, or render me de-

ſerving of any good thing. I have a conſtant and growing conviction that I am wholly dependant on the preventing, ſovereign grace of God for my recovery, from this miſerable, loſt ſtate of infinite guilt and total depravity, and for the leaſt degree of ſincerity and faith or conformity to the law of God; that I am wholly loſt, and ſhall ſink down to hell an enemy to God and all good, and juſtly periſh forever, unleſs Chriſt, by his ſovereign goodneſs, cloathed with omnipotence and infinite wiſdom, ſhall recover and ſave me, while I ſhall not do any thing towards my ſalvation, or make the leaſt exertion for it; but all that I will and do is contrary to it, unleſs and no farther than he ſhall work in me to will and to do, of his ſovereign good pleaſure, what he requires as neceſſary to my ſalvation. Thus I feel myſelf to be an infinitely guilty, odious creature, utterly undone in myſelf, and have not a word to ſay, and have not a thought in my favour; my mouth is ſtopped in this reſpect, and I am guilty before God, and accept the puniſhment of my iniquity.

If this which I have imperfectly deſcribed implies the eſſentials of real repentance, in which I humble myſelf in the ſight of the Lord, with a broken and contrite heart, then I have a new heart and am intereſted in the divine promiſes.—But if not,—Then I have never yet underſtood the true meaning of theſe words of ſcripture,

and my eyes are yet blinded with regard to my own character!

2. I think I do moſt heartily approve of, and acquieſce in the perſon and character of Chriſt, and am pleaſed with the way of ſalvation of ſinners by him. All his directions, exhortations, commands, doctrines which he taught, all that he ſaid, did and ſuffered, and all his revealed purpoſes and deſigns, appear wiſe, good and excellent, and carry clear marks and abundant evidence of divinity in them. Hence

3. I do, I think, place all my hope in him, and deſire not to be found and accepted in any righteouſneſs of my own, were this poſſible; but to be pardoned and juſtified by the merit and righteouſneſs of Chriſt. I am ſenſibly and greatly pleaſed with being wholly dependant on him for righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and compleat redemption. If there were any other poſſible way of ſalvation, which I know there is not, I would reject it, not deſiring to be ſaved in any way but that which is revealed in the goſpel.

4. I think I deſire and ſeek the glory of God and the greateſt good and happineſs of the univerſe, as my higheſt and ultimate end; and in this view am pleaſed with and rejoice in the character and deſigns of God and Chriſt, who is doing every thing for this end, and will accompliſh it in the moſt perfect manner, and in the

highest possible degree. And on this account I am highly pleased with Christ and the gospel, as by the redemption of man by Christ, God is glorified in an eminent degree, and the greatest happiness of creatures promoted and effected. And for this reason I acquiesce in it that all of the human race should not be saved, but a part of them perish forever in their sins, as divine revelation has declared; because I know this is necessary for the glory of God, and the greatest good of his eternal kingdom, and not one will be lost forever, who could be saved consistently with this; and therefore all will be saved who can be saved consistently with infinite wisdom and goodness. Therefore

5. I am most satisfied and pleased, when I have the most clear and feeling sense of my being in the hands of Christ in the most perfect and absolute sense and degree, and wholly at his disposal in time and to eternity; knowing that he will do with and by me what is most for his glory and the good of his kingdom; and that he will save me, if he can do it consistently with this; and this is all that I can desire. Therefore I am well pleased with being in his hands and wholly at his disposal, let him do what he will with me, and cannot conceive of a better and more desirable situation: yea, I know there cannot be a better.

When I reflect on the feelings and exercises ex-

preſſed in the two laſt particulars, they ſeem to me to be the expreſſion of true diſintereſted benevolence, or that *love* by which we are formed after the likeneſs of God, and he dwelleth in us, and we in him. The reaſon of my doubting of this, eſpecially at times, has been in ſome meaſure ſuggeſted before, and will be more fully expreſſed in the ſequel.

6. I think I do hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs. My longing to be perfectly holy is, ſometimes, very ſenſible and ſtrong, exceeding all deſires of earthly things that I have, or of which I am capable. I have often, felt willing and a deſire to die immediately, if this might bring me to perfect holineſs, to a complete conformity to Chriſt.

7. I feel my heart ſtrongly united to thoſe whom I conſider to be real friends to Chriſt, in benevolent and complacential love; eſpecially thoſe with whom I am more particularly and intimately acquainted. I have a quite different feeling toward them from that which I have toward others, and have a peculiar delight in their company and converſation.

8. My preaching and converſation has been generally acceptable and pleaſing to thoſe whom I have eſteemed the moſt judicious and beſt chriſtians, ſo far as I have been able to learn.

I have not only preached the doctrines which I verily believed to be true, but heartily approved of them, and have delivered those truths of the word of God respecting practical and experimental religion, which were the dictates of my heart, and often, if not commonly, suggested by my own feelings and exercises; and have not endeavoured to appear better or in a more agreeable light, than was agreeable to the truth, though I am sensible that my christian friends, have in many instances and respects, thought too highly of me, which has been matter of shame and humiliation to me; yet their love and esteem, I have been ready to consider as an evidence in my favour, though of little weight considered by itself, as we know not each others hearts, and are liable to be greatly deceived in others. I therefore mention this as coinciding with, and in some measure strengthening the evidences which have been mentioned. This is at least an evidence that what appears in my preaching, conversation and external conduct, which, so far as I know, is in general agreeable to my heart, at least I do not on design attempt to play the hypocrite, is to judicious christians, who are most acquainted with me, an evidence that I am a real christian.

I proceed to mention some things which appear to me, at times at least, reason of fear that I never have known what it is to be a real chris-

tian, and are at times, if not generally the cauſe of many doubts.

1. My ſtupidity and hardneſs of heart, with reſpect to things divine and inviſible, or the truths exhibited in the goſpel. At times, and I believe I may ſay generally, I have very little or no ſenſe of theſe things, and they make very little impreſſion on my heart, if any; and I often feel as if they had no exiſtence, while in my reaſon and judgment I have no doubt of their truth and reality: And when I have ſome ſenſe of the truth, reality and excellence of them, and even when I have the greateſt ſenſe and the moſt affecting view and impreſſion of them on my heart, and I am moſt ſtrongly and deeply affected with them, I am ſenſible that the view and ſenſe I have is very imperfect and unſpeakably ſhort of the truth, and of what I ought to have, and even the greateſt impreſſion, and higheſt affection that I at any time experience, commonly ſoon abate and ſubſide, and I am left as ſtupid and ſenſeleſs as ever: and what I thought I had experienced ſeems like a dream, and as if, it was not a reality. This ſtupidity and ſenſeleſſneſs is commonly moſt ſenſible and burdenſome in my public performances of prayer and preaching; and even when I have freedom of ſpeech and a flow of words, and my chriſtian friends have thought I was greatly aſſiſted, I have been conſcious of my great and ſhameful ſtupidity and

want of a proper ſenſe of the things of which I have been ſpeaking. This, which is more or leſs ſenſibly felt, is my conſtant attendant, and the grief and burden of my heart, and matter of my conſtant confeſſions and prayer to God for deliverance from it; being always ſenſibly convinced that no external light and advantages, or any means uſed, will in the leaſt remove this ſtupidity and hardneſs of heart; but that the ſpirit of God alone can remove it, and give me that ſpiritual ſenſibility and feeling of heart, which I ſeem moſt earneſtly to deſire. I conſider this ſtupidity, blindneſs and inſenſibility of heart to divine things, to be altogether, and infinitely criminal, as it muſt be owing to the moral corruption and depravity of my heart, or rather conſiſt wholly in depravity and wickedneſs of heart, being hardened, contracted and bound up in ſelfiſhneſs and pride, and all the evil propenſities which are implied in theſe. This is *unbelief of heart*, which is conſiſtent with a conviction of the reaſon and judgment, of the truths contained in the goſpel; for no degree of ſuch conviction will in the leaſt remove this blindneſs, hardneſs and *unbelief* of heart, which I am conſidering. But blindneſs and unbelief of heart have a ſtrong tendency to prevent or remove a conviction of the judgment and conſcience of the truth and reality of inviſible things, and to promote ſpeculative unbelief of them; and, are the real and only ground of all deiſm and atheiſm, and all ſpecu-

lative infidelity. This gives ſatan great advantage to blind the minds of them who believe not, and lead them captives to infidelity, which he improves to the utmoſt of his power.

I do not ſenſibly perceive the real ground and reaſon of this darkneſs and ſtupidity of my mind with reſpect to inviſible things, but am moſt ſenſible of the fact, while the cauſe of this lamentable fact is out of ſight, and is rather the object of reaſon and ſpeculation. This blindneſs and ſtupidity of heart are ſo ſenſible and appear ſo great to me, eſpecially at times, that I much doubt whether it be conſiſtent with the true knowledge of God, or my having any real chriſtian light and diſcerning, which Chriſt calls "the light of life," which he gives to all his true followers. Yet I know that when I hear profeſſing chriſtians complain of their ſtupidity and blindneſs, &c. I do not conſider this as an evidence that they are not chriſtians, but rather in their favour, as a ſign that they have a ſenſibility and diſcerning reſpecting their own hearts, which is peculiar to chriſtians. But it is not eaſy for me to apply this to myſelf, and draw ſuch a conſequence in my own favour. I am apt to conſider my blindneſs and ſtupidity not to be like that of others, but greater and peculiar to myſelf.

2. My life and converſation, all taken to-

gether, both external and internal, appear very much againſt me, and ſo deſtitute of any good fruit, and ſo full of deformity and ſin both of omiſſion and commiſſion, that I know not how to reconcile it with the life of a chriſtian, eſpecially at ſome times, when I have a view of it as a moſt deformed and odious life, conſidering the many and peculiar advantages and opportunities I have had, and my great obligations to live a holy life, wholly devoted to Chriſt; all which I have abuſed in a greater or leſs degree continually. Though I dare not ſay I have not been, and am not in any degree ſincere in my regard to Chriſt and the truths of the goſpel; and have a hope that I have had and now have ſome ſincerity: Yet I cannot look back upon a *well ſpent life*, for it appears unſpeakably far from ſuch an one. I have often ſaid, "I will be wiſe," but it has been far from me. I cannot view myſelf as a *good and faithful* ſervant of Jeſus Chriſt, but much to the contrary; and therefore cannot realize it, or even conceive how he can view and call me ſuch an one, as he repreſents that he will do all who ſhall be owned by him at the laſt day. This is often cauſe of great doubts, and fears that I am not a real ſervant of Jeſus Chriſt. I know he will own and accept of the leaſt thing done for him from a true regard to him, but I feel that I have nothing that I have done to plead in my favour.

3. It has been matter of doubt and diſcouragement to me, that I have little or no ſucceſs by my preaching, in being made the inſtrument of awakening and converting ſinners. But very few inſtances of this have come to my knowledge, and theſe not very remarkable and clear. I came upon the ſtage and began to preach when there was a great and general revival of religion in New-England; many were awakened, and thought to be converted, and many miniſters were ſucceſsful in this, and had great revivals in their congregations: but no ſuch thing has appeared under my preaching, though ſome individuals have ſometimes appeared to be in ſome degree awakened. I ſhould expect that a good miniſter of Chriſt would be ſucceeded in this reſpect eſpecially when others round about him were ſucceſsful, more than I have appeared to be. This has led me to fear, eſpecially at times, that there is ſome eſſential defect in me, and that I had not the true ſpirit of Chriſt, and his real preſence and approbation. I do not think I have reaſon to conclude that my miniſtrations in preaching, writing and converſation have been altogether uſeleſs and unprofitable. They have been acceptable to many, if not to all, who have appeared to be chriſtians, eſpecially to the moſt attentive, engaged and judicious; and many have thought themſelves greatly inſtructed, ſtrengthened and comforted by them; and my uſefulneſs, if there has been any, has not con-

siſted in being the mean of convincing and converting ſinners; but chiefly in miniſtering to the ſaints and building them up in faith and holineſs: and I believe my publications have been the means of ſpreading light with reſpect to ſome important doctrines of chriſtianity. This I conſider as matter of thankfulneſs; but, it does not wholly remove my gloom and doubts, which ariſe from the inefficacy of my preaching, with reſpect to ſinners; and when I attend to the great and ſhameful defects and poorneſs of my preaching, and the little ſenſe I have of what I do ſay, &c. together with want of ſucceſs, I don't wonder my preaching is without effect, and my doubts of my having any true grace are increaſed.

Thus I have endeavoured to ſtate thoſe things which appear to be evidences in favour of my being a real chriſtian, and thoſe which, on the contrary, appear to be evidences againſt it. There are many other things, which, in themſelves perhaps, are of leſs weight, but when conſidered with thoſe mentioned both for and againſt me, ſometimes have conſiderable influence on my mind to increaſe my hopes or fears: but as they are not eaſily deſcribed; and are in ſome meaſure included in the above particulars, I paſs them over without a more particular mention.

When I have only or chiefly a *ſpeculative* view

of all these things which have been mentioned, and more, both for and against me, and they are seldom out of my thoughts; the whole taken together to my reason and judgment appear to be rather in my favour, and ground of hope that I am what I profess to be, a real christian. But this speculative view, without any great degree of sense of heart, is not attended with any comfortable assurance, or sensible enjoyment, as this consists in *a sense of heart* of the truth and excellency of the things of the gospel, which is entirely different from the clearest speculative view of them. This sense of heart is various, sometimes in a greater, and some times in a less degree, and some times has a particular object in view, and at other times another object is more in view and makes the greatest impression, and the heart cannot be equally sensible of all objects at once, or one must be more in view than another.

This is agreeable to my experience. When I have an impressive and affecting sense of heart of the truths of the gospel, and those sensible views and exercises which have been mentioned as evidences in my favour, and my attention is fixed on those objects, my doubts vanish, and I think little or nothing of myself, and my own character: but the objects viewed engross my attention. But when I reflect on my present exercises, my hope revives and is strengthened;

but I have great comfort and enjoyment independent of my hope, and while my own ſtate is not attended to. Indeed my comfort and enjoyment are previous to the revival of my hope, and the ground of it. For inſtance, when I have an affecting view and ſenſe of heart of the glorious character of Chriſt, his works and deſigns, his exaltation and dominion, &c. this is attended with a ſenſible, ſweet approbation of heart of all that is ſeen and that relates to him, and gives high ſatisfaction and enjoyment, when this view and ſenſe, approbation and delight, &c. are reflected upon, be it ſooner or later: and while theſe ſenſible views and exerciſes continue and do not ſubſide, my hope of my intereſt in theſe things revives, and my doubts vaniſh: and often, if not always, this reflection is ſo immediate, that it ſeems to attend theſe views, exerciſes and enjoyments, and to be ſo connected with and implied in them, that I do not diſtinguiſh one from the other in my own feelings, but the hope and even aſſurance of my intereſt in Chriſt ſeems to be *intuitive* and I am not conſcious that it is by reflection.

But when my ſenſible exerciſes towards theſe affecting objects, and my attention to them, in ſome meaſure ſubſide, and thoſe things which have been mentioned as evidences againſt me are more clearly in my view, which of courſe will be the caſe, and are the objects of my

particular and painful attention, they preponderate in the ſcale of my mind, and doubts ariſe, and ſome times greatly prevail; and, I queſtion the truth and reality of my former views and exerciſes, or that they were truly gracious, and they appear rather as a dream than a reality.

Thus my mind fluctuates, and paſſes from one object to another, and has ſometimes more clear and ſenſible views of one object than of another, and is more impreſſed and affected with it: and then the other has its turn of attracting my ſenſible attention, and the former goes more, if not wholly, out of view for a time. And I believe a chriſtian cannot live without doubts of his good eſtate, and maintain a well grounded uninterrupted confidence and aſſurance that he is a chriſtian, unleſs he lives in a view and ſenſe of divine truth, and in the exerciſe of chriſtian grace. I am in ſome meaſure ſenſible that it is wholly my fault that I do not live ſo, in ſuch conſtant view and ſenſe of divine truth and high exerciſe of conſtant love to Chriſt, and faith in and devotedneſs to him, which would exclude all doubts of my intereſt in him, and be attended with an aſſurance that I have the ſpirit of Chriſt. And I deſire no other evidence of my intereſt in Chriſt but this; or, to be aſſured of my good eſtate in any other way, but in the lively exerciſe of true grace. I have been acquainted with ſome profeſſing chriſtians, who

have declared that they have lived many years without a doubt of their good eſtate, and they were conſtantly aſſured that they were intereſted in Chriſt and ſhould be ſaved, who did not appear to me to have any ſolemn conſtant ſenſe of the truths of chriſtianity, or to live anſwerable to ſuch a profeſſion; and therefore am diſpoſed to think they are deluded, and moſt probably have no grace at all.

There are others, who appear to be real, and ſome of them excellent chriſtians by their life and converſation, who appear never to call in queſtion or doubt their having true grace; but ſome how always take it for granted as a ſettled point that they are chriſtians: while there are others who appear to be as good and eminent chriſtians as the former, who have many doubts, eſpecially at times, of their being real chriſtians, and never ſpeak of their being ſuch with that confidence as the former do, not without an *if*, or ſome heſitation. Theſe may, perhaps, both be equally good chriſtians, and have equally ſtrong and high exerciſes of grace at times, and their difference above mentioned may be owing to their different natural temper, or education, or the different public inſtruction they have lived under, or to the circumſtances and manner of their firſt diſcoveries of divine truth, and peculiar impreſſions and exerciſes when they were converted or afterwards, or from ſome-

thing elſe which is not known to them or to us. But it is probable they are both in ſome degree wrong in two oppoſite extremes. The former being habituated to conſider themſelves to be chriſtians without having the preſent evidence of it in their own minds by the ſenſible exerciſe of grace, relying upon it that they have had ſuch exerciſes often, and an aſſurance that they did devote themſelves to Chriſt, and that he was their choſen Saviour, &c. and think it is a ſin ever to doubt of this. And perhaps they, at leaſt ſome of them, think, having been taught ſo, that this is *living by faith, and not by ſight*, and that it is a ſin to doubt, let their preſent frame and exerciſes of mind be what they may.

The latter have minds of a contrary caſt. They are diſpoſed to be diffident with reſpect to their own exerciſes which may be ſuppoſed to be thoſe of real chriſtians. They are habituated to look on the dark ſide, and draw concluſions againſt themſelves. Though, at times, they have ſuch views and exerciſes as to revive their hope, and even remove all doubt of their being real chriſtians. Yet when theſe exerciſes ſubſide in a conſiderable degree at leaſt, and they ſee much in their heart, contrary to theſe, their doubts ariſe and they fear they have been deluded. They attend moſt to the evils in their hearts and lives, their ſelfiſhneſs and pride, hardneſs of heart and unbelief, &c. their want

of love to God and great deficiency in every right exercise, if they have the least degree of them; and they view their lives as very defective and unfruitful, the fruit of sloth and indifference to the most affecting and important things &c. &c. They are disposed to dwell most upon these things in their thoughts and meditations, which tends to keep up a gloom in their minds and a despondency which seems not so well to become christians, who are required to be cheerful and to rejoice always. These therefore do undoubtedly err on the other hand from the former, though the source and manner of their error may not be easily discovered and explained. If I am a real christian, I must be numbered with the latter, though differing in some respects perhaps, from many of them, if not from all. But I could wish that I were such a christian as not to be justly classed with either the former or the latter; but with those who live in such a constant affecting view and sense of invisible, eternal things, and in the exercise of such pleasing approbation of the character of Christ, and such strong and sensible love to him, as to exclude all doubt, and enable me at all times, to say with Peter, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee."

They who oppose faith to sensibility and all gracious exercise of heart are grosly erroneous and absurd in their notion of true spiritual sensi-

bility and of faith, and they wholly pervert and misapply the words of the Apostle Paul, when he says, "We live by faith, and not by sight," for he does not here oppose faith to spiritual sight and sensibility of heart; but to the discerning and sight of the things of this present world. Not living by sight is the same with not looking at the things which are seen

Faith is spiritual sight and sensibility of heart, and where the one is not, the other cannot exist, and to attempt to distinguish and separate them is just as unreasonable and absurd as to attempt to make two different things of that which is one and the same thing. Spiritual sight and discerning of invisible things, or the truth revealed in the gospel, imply sensibility and exercise of heart, and in this true faith consists, or this is the essence of faith, so that where this is not, there is no true faith; for *with the heart*, man believeth, and none have saving faith but they who believe the truths of the gospel *with all their heart.* Faith worketh by love. That is, faith acts and operates efficaciously by love. Love is the life and active nature of faith; so that where there is no love, there is no faith, but that which is a lifeless dead one. Faith purifieth the heart, it is itself purity of heart by which it sees God, and consequently all those invisible things which are implied in his Being and perfections, and which he has revealed to man. Faith is the *single eye*

which belongs to the heart, is the ſame with purity of heart, by which the mind ſees the truth and is filled with ſpiritual light, love and holy affection.

There is therefore no ſuch thing poſſible as living by faith, without ſpiritual ſight and that ſenſibility of heart in which is implied the exerciſe of every chriſtian grace; for this is a plain contradiction, and a dangerous error. So that they are under a great deluſion, who think that they are living, in this ſenſe by faith and not by ſight; for this is the ſame with living by faith and not living by faith. Such either have no idea of faith, or they mean by it a mere ſpeculative belief which wicked men and devils may have: Or by faith they mean a perſuaſion or belief that Chriſt died for them, that they are intereſted in all the promiſes of the covenant of grace, &c. This indeed appears to be the meaning of moſt, if not all of thoſe of whom I am now ſpeaking. They hold that ſaving faith is believing that Chriſt is *my* Saviour, and that conſequently all his promiſes are mine, &c. or that this belief is neceſſarily implied in ſaving faith, and eſſential to it. They contend that this faith is not founded on any evidence from within ourſelves, any exerciſe of heart, of love to God, &c. but it is a direct perſuaſion and undoubting belief that Chriſt died for me and is mine and will ſave me, without any evidence that I have

any ſenſibility or friendlineſs of heart towards his character, or conſciouſneſs of any thing in me different from what was always there, or from what any man in the world has. In ſhort, it is a faith or belief not grounded on any evidence diſcerned in ourſelves, by which we differ from any other ſinner, and to which any promiſe is made; and without any evidence of what we believe from the bible or any reaſon whatever. This is with them a ſtrong heroic faith, and even the only true ſaving faith; for it is their opinion that men cannot have any grace in their hearts, ſuch as love to Chriſt, repentance, &c. until they believe that Chriſt loves them and died for them. This faith and perſuaſion being the cauſe or ground of every chriſtian grace, and true ſenſibility and gracious affection of the heart. Hence they think that looking for any ſuch thing in ourſelves, as an evidence that we have an intereſt in Chriſt and ſhall be ſaved by him, is an uncertain and legal way of obtaining aſſurance, and not to be depended on, and will be attended with endleſs doubts and uncertainty, at beſt.

Mr. Marſhal wrote a book, many years ago, on this plan, and expreſsly ſays that faith, by which he means believing that Chriſt is ours, and that we ſhall be ſaved by him, is not grounded on any thing we find in ourſelves, which has been wrought in us by the ſpirit of God, or on any evidence from *ſcripture, or ſenſe, or reaſon*; but

this propoſition that Chriſt and ſalvation are ours, we muſt believe and be aſſured is true, without any evidence of the truth of it from any thing whatſoever. And from *this faith* when men attain to it, the heart will be filled with love to God and every chriſtian grace. This book has had a number of editions, and has been read and admired by thouſands. Mr. Hervey a late noted and celebrated writer in England, was in the ſame ſcheme with Mr. Marſhal, and he ſpeaks of his book in terms of warm approbation, and recommends it as the next book to the bible. Mr. Hervey's dialogues, which are on this plan, have had a great run and have been greatly approved by religious people in general. And no man has expreſsly written againſt his and Marſhal's notion of faith, &c. in Great-Britain that I have heard of; and their ſcheme or ſomething like it, is generally embraced now by thoſe who call themſelves calviniſts both clergy and laity in Great-Britain. The only perſon who has written expreſsly againſt theſe writers, and expoſed the falſehood and abſurdity of their notion of love to God, faith in Chriſt, and aſſurance of a title to eternal life, is Doctor Bellamy, which book is read but by very few in Great-Britain; partly, I ſuppoſe, becauſe it expoſes and condemns the ſentiments of theſe men on the heads mentioned, who are in high eſteem there for their eminent piety. But were they ever ſo truly pious in heart, and religious and exemplary in

their conduct; yet these principles, which they advocated, are not the less, but the more dangerous and mischievous on that account, and therefore ought to be exposed, in all their falsehood, absurdity and evil tendency. For they are indeed directly contrary to the scripture, to truth and reason, and of the most dangerous and hurtful tendency; and represent experimental religion as the most irrational and absurd thing that was ever imagined. The papists' doctrine of transubstantiation, and any doctrine contained in the alcoran of the Mahometans, is not more contradictory, irrational and absurd than these sentiments are, with whatever artful and specious colors they may be dressed up.

I have dwelt thus long on this head as these sentiments appear to me so contrary to scripture, and are of such pernicious tendency, and are contrary to all my religious experience, as they are to my reason. But if I am not a christian, and all my exercises of heart and religious experiences fall short of true religion, and are mere delusion; yet I am certain that the sentiments concerning love to God, faith in Jesus Christ, and assurance of an interest in him now mentioned, cannot be true, but are gross delusion; and they, whose exercises of heart, and experimental religion are wholly built upon these principles, are awfully deluded, and strangers to real religion. I will now mention some of the exercises on which my assurance of *this* is grounded.

1. Such a faith has no evidence of what is believed, and therefore is without foundation, and a mere deluſion. They ſay it is believing that of which there is no evidence from ſcripture, ſenſe or reaſon; and this implies that it is contrary to ſcripture, ſenſe and reaſon, for what is not agreeable to theſe muſt be contrary to them. And we are certain it is contrary to reaſon and ſcripture to believe without any evidence, and the latter abundantly declares that they have no intereſt in Chriſt, who do not come to him, and are not poſſeſſed of that which implies love to him. Therefore ſuch a belief is a deluſion and a belief of a lie.

2. Such a faith is not the faith which the goſpel deſcribes. No ſuch faith is ſpoken of as ſaving faith. It does not conſiſt in believing Chriſt is mine, &c. but in believing with all the heart that he is the ſon of God, &c. And the evidence that we have this faith and thoſe things which are implied in it, is the only good evidence we can have, according to ſcripture or the reaſon and nature of things, that Chriſt is our Saviour. This leads to another particular,

3. The aſſurance a man gets that Chriſt is his Saviour, only by believing it to be true without any evidence, is always falſe aſſurance, and only the belief of a lie. There is no other true aſſurance or belief that Chriſt is our Saviour, but

that which is grounded on evidence that ſomething has taken place in us which implies a new heart, and real love to him, which is real holineſs. So that ſanctification of heart is the only good evidence any one can have of juſtification, or an intereſt in Chriſt.

4. This plan is wholly built upon ſelfiſhneſs, and according to it ſelf-love is the foundation of love to God, and of all chriſtian grace. Therefore in order to our loving God, we muſt believe he loves us, and Chriſt died for us, &c. But this is not true love to God. And all the religion which is built on this plan is nothing but a piece of ſelfiſhneſs, which according to ſcripture and reaſon is not true religion, but wickedneſs.

END OF THE LIFE.

A

DIALOGUE,

BETWEEN A

CALVINIST

AND A

SEMI-CALVINIST.

A DIALOGUE.

SEMI-CALVINIST.

SIR, I have wanted, for ſome time, to talk with you about the notion, which ſome lately advance, viz. That chriſtians may, yea, that they ought, and muſt be willing to periſh forever, in order to be chriſtians. This is a ſhocking doctrine to me: For I believe it abſolutely impoſſible for any one to be willing to be eternally wretched; and, if it were poſſible, it would be very wicked; for we are commanded to do that which is directly contrary to this, viz. to deſire and ſeek to eſcape damnation, and to be ſaved; as all our moſt conſiderable and beſt divines have taught, which I could eaſily prove, were it neceſſary.

CALVINIST. I can decide nothing upon this matter until I know what is meant by being *willing to be miſerable forever*, by thoſe who aſſert this, or *you*, who oppoſe it. Let me then aſk you, Do you ſuppoſe that by being willing to be miſerable is meant a being pleaſed with damnation, or chooſing to be miſerable forever, *for its own ſake* or in itſelf conſidered; and preferring miſery, eternal miſery, and being juſt as the damned will be, to eternal happineſs, and being juſt as the bleſſed will be forever, conſidering the form-

er as being in itſelf better than the latter? This is doubtleſs impoſſible, and if it were not, would be very unreaſonable and wicked. And I queſtion whether any one ever believed this, or meant to aſſert it, by ſaying that chriſtians ought to be willing to periſh forever. But if by being willing to be caſt off by God forever, be meant, that however great and dreadful this evil is; yet a chriſtian may and ought to be willing to ſuffer it, if it be neceſſary in order to avoid a *greater evil*; or to obtain an overbalancing good, if ſuch a caſe can be ſuppoſed: This, I think, is true, and ought to maintained, as eſſential to the character of a chriſtian; and that the contrary doctrine is dangerous and hurtful. For it is eſſential to true benevolence to prefer a greater good to a leſs, and a leſs evil to a greater, and that whether it be private or public good or evil; or his own perſonal good or evil, or that of others.

SEMI. I am unable to conceive what you mean by "a greater evil" than eternal damnation, or "a greater good" to be promoted by this evil. Is not this the greateſt of all evils? And what good is left for him, who is doomed to eternal miſery? I grant that a man may, and ought to ſubject himſelf, in many caſes, to a leſs evil, in order to avoid a greater, or to obtain a greatly overbalancing good; but in the propoſed caſe all good is loſt forever, and the greateſt poſſible evil takes place, and nothing but evil, without end.

CALV. Is not the damnation of millions a greater evil than the damnation of a ſingle perſon? And is not the eternal happineſs of millions a greater good, than that of one individual? This I know you will grant. Suppoſing it were neceſſary for one individual to be miſerable forever in order to ſave a million from this miſery; and by his ſubjecting himſelf to this, they would all be ſaved from this evil, and be eternally happy: ought he not to be willing to periſh, in ſuch a caſe and on this ſuppoſition? And if he ſhould not be willing to give himſelf up to this evil, to ſave a million from it, and to make them eternally happy, would he not prefer a million times greater evil to one a million times leſs; and chooſe a million times leſs good and prefer it to one a million times greater? And if this is not unreaſonable and wicked, and directly contrary to true benevolence, what can be?

SEMI. This is making an impoſſible ſuppoſition. The damnation of one man cannot ſave one, much leſs a million.

CALV. I grant it is an impoſſible ſuppoſition; but it nevertheleſs ſerves to ſhow that there may be a greater evil than the damnation of one individual; a good that will overbalance a million times, the evil of the damnation of one man; and that *on ſuppoſition*, this greater evil can be avoided, and the overbalancing good obtained, by the damnation of one man, and can be done no other way, then it is deſirable he ſhould be dam-

ned, and he ought to be willing, and to chooſe it. St. Paul makes this ſame ſuppoſition, when he ſays, "I could wiſh that myſelf were accurſed from Chriſt, for my brethren, my kinſmen, according to the fleſh," and declares that he ſhould be willing to periſh and could even *wiſh it*, if by that means, all the nation of the Jews might be ſaved.

SEMI. This is carrying things too far. It is impoſſible that any man ſhould be willing to give up *all good*, and to be miſerable *forever*, for the ſake of the good of others, be it ever ſo great. And you miſunderſtand St. Paul, when you ſuppoſe he ſays that he ſhould be willing to periſh for the ſake of the ſalvation of his brethren. By being accurſed from Chriſt, he means ſome temporary evil only, which he might ſuffer conſiſtently with his being a chriſtian, and his obtaining eternal life.

CALV. You implicitly grant in what you have juſt ſaid, that a man may be willing to ſuffer evil, and a great degree of it, for the ſake of the good of others: And indeed, this muſt be granted by all who allow there is any ſuch thing in nature as diſintereſted benevolence, or loving our neighbour as ourſelves. And that this is the nature of true love or charity the ſcripture aſſerts "charity ſeeketh not her own." And all men will grant that it is reaſonable that a man ſhould give up his own good to a great degree for the ſake of his neighbour's good: He ought

to be willing, for inſtance, to endure hunger a whole day, to ſave his neighbour from ſtarving: He ought to be willing to give up his whole worldly intereſt and comfort, and live a life of poverty and want, if this were neceſſary to ſave a whole nation from ruin, and make them rich and happy: yea, he ought to be willing to expoſe, and give up his life, if this were neceſſary for the good of his country, and to ſave the lives of millions.

And if this be the nature of benevolence, and moſt reaſonable, what bounds can be ſet to it, and where ſhall it ſtop? If true benevolence will give up twenty degrees of perſonal good for the ſake of a thouſand degrees of good to others: it will give up a thouſand degrees, for the ſake of obtaining fifty thouſand degrees of good to others; and ſo on, till he has given up *all* his own perſonal good for a proportionably greater good to the public. Nothing but a want of benevolence or a defect of it, can render a man unwilling, in the caſe propoſed, to give up *all* his perſonal good. And there is the ſame reaſon for his doing it, as there is for his giving up one degree of his own good for the ſake of procuring fifty degrees of good to others.

And if benevolence will lead a man to ſuffer one degree of pain and miſery, in order to ſave another from an hundred degrees of pain, and it be moſt reaſonable that he ſhould; then, for the ſame reaſon he will be willing to ſuffer an

hundred degrees of pain or positive evil, if this be necessary in order to save his neighbours from ten thousand degrees of evil; and he must be willing to suffer all the positive evil and pain that he is capable of through the whole of his existence, if this be necessary to save an hundred thousand or even an hundred, from this evil. For there is the same reason why he should be willing to suffer *all this* for the sake of a proportionably greater good to others, as that he should be willing to suffer one degree, to save others from an hundred degrees. And if it be contrary to benevolence to be unwilling to suffer one degree, of evil to save others from an hundred degrees of it; it must be equally contrary to it to be unwilling to suffer all possible degrees of evil, for the sake of saving others from a proportionably greater evil.

It hence appears that the apostle Paul, spoke the language of true benevolence, and declared he felt, as he ought to feel, when he said, he could wish himself *accursed from Christ*, if by this means his brethren might be saved, if we understand him as meaning, that he was willing to be lost forever for their sake, that they might be saved. And why shall he not be understood to say, what he ought to say, and to speak the language of true benevolence; since this is the natural import of his words, and to be *accursed from Christ*, cannot mean less than eternal damnation, without putting an unnatural, forced

meaning upon them ? St. Paul certainly thought it was a great evil which he mentions, and was willing it ſhould come upon him for the ſake of his brethren ; ſince he meant hereby to expreſs his love to them. If the evil were ſmall and inconſiderable, it expreſſed but a ſmall and inconſiderable degree of benevolence ; and the greater the evil was, which he was willing to ſuffer for their ſake, the greater benevolence was expreſſed. He therefore doubtleſs mentioned the greateſt evil, that he could conceive, and that he was capable of ſuffering ; when he meant to expreſs the greatneſs and ſtrength of his love to them. And, by the way, as it was no argument that Paul thought it to be a ſmall evil or none at all to be *accurſed from Chriſt*, or that he had no averſion to it, and that it was not dreadful to him ; but the contrary, becauſe he was willing to ſuffer it, for the ſake of his brethren : ſo it is no argument that any man does not think damnation infinitely dreadful, and has not a proper averſion to it, becauſe he is willing to be damned, rather than a greater evil ſhould take place, or for the ſake of promoting a greater good.

SEMI. For my part, I muſt ſay, this is all darkneſs to me. How can theſe thing be ?

CALV. Let us take another, or a little different view of this point ; perhaps it may be ſet in a more eaſy, convincing light. I conclude you will grant that the glory of God, or the greateſt

and moſt advatageous diſplay of the divine perfections, is of the higheſt importance; and that it is reaſonable, and our duty to make this our higheſt and ſupreme end, in all our deſires and actions; and that we ought not to be willing any thing ſhould take place, inconſiſtent with his glory; and that we ought to be willing *that* ſhould take place, be it what it may, which is moſt for his glory; even though it be the eternal damnation of ſinners.

SEMI. I grant that we ought to make the glory of God our ſupreme end. But this will be ſo far from making us willing to be damned, that it will lead us to deſire and purſue our ſalvation, that he may be glorified in that, and that we may glorify him forever.

CALV. But it is not for the glory of God that all ſhould be ſaved; but moſt for his glory that a number ſhould be damned; otherwiſe all would be ſaved. We will therefore now make a ſuppoſition, which is not an impoſſible one, viz. that it is moſt for God's glory, and for the univerſal good that you ſhould be damned; ought you not to be willing to be damned, on this ſuppoſition, that God could not be glorified by you in any other way?

SEMI. You are full of your *ſuppoſitions*; I will not, I cannot, I have no buſineſs to *ſuppoſe* any ſuch thing.

CALV. You know that it is moſt for the glory of God that ſome ſhould be damned. And

if you do not know that you are a christian, you do not know but it is in fact true, that it is most for the glory of God, that you should be damned; the supposition is therefore natural and easy, and you cannot well avoid making it. Supposing then this were true, which may be true, notwithstanding any thing you know, how ought you to feel with respect to it? ought you not to be willing to be damned?

SEMI. This is impossible!

CALV. I grant it is impossible to one who values himself, and his own personal interest and happiness, more than he does the glory of God, and the highest interest of his kingdom. And it is infallibly certain that every one who lives and dies with such a disposition, will and must be damned. But to him who loves God supremely, and desires his glory above all things, it is so far from being impossible to be willing to be damned, on supposition this is most for God's glory, that he could not will or choose any thing else. He must say, "let God be glorified, let what will become of me." If he cannot say so, it is because his own interest and happiness, are of more importance with him, than the glory of God; or in other words, because he is not a true friend, but an enemy to God.

SEMI. But suppose he knows he loves God, and therefore knows that it is for the glory of God that he should be saved?

CALV. No man can know that he loves God, until he does really love him; that is until he does ſeek his glory above all things, and is diſpoſed to ſay, "let God be glorified, whatever may be neceſſary in order to it," without making any exception: and this is to be willing to be damned, if this be neceſſary for the glory of God. And as he cannot know that he loves God, till he has this diſpoſition, which is neceſſarily implied in love to God, he does not know that it is not neceſſary for the glory of God that he ſhould be damned. He therefore cannot know that he loves God, and ſhall be ſaved, until he knows he has that diſpoſition which implies a willingneſs to be damned, if it be not moſt for the glory of God that he ſhould be ſaved. And if any one thinks he loves God, and ſhall be ſaved; if he finds that his love to God does not imply, a willingneſs to be damned, if this were moſt for his glory, he has reaſon to conclude that he is deceived, and that what he calls love to God is really enmity againſt him. For he, who cannot love God on any ſuppoſition but that he will not damn but ſave him, is not a friend, but an enemy to God.

Let us examine this matter in a little different light ſtill. I would aſk the following queſtion. Is it not reaſonable, and a duty to ſubmit to the will of God, and acquieſce in it, reſpecting his governing providence, and diſpoſal of all things; ſo as to be able to ſay. "thy will be done," without making any exception?

SEMI. I cannot object againſt this; it muſt be anſwered in the affirmative; for God's will is infinitely wiſe and good, and it is rebellion againſt him to be unwilling that he ſhould do as he pleaſes, or to make any exception whatever.

CALV. You have conceeded all that is neceſſary, I think, in order to decide the point in diſpute between us. God has revealed it to be his will to puniſh ſome of mankind forever. You know not but you are one of them. Whether you ſhall be ſaved or damned depends entirely on his will: And ſuppoſing he ſees it moſt for his glory, and the general good that you ſhould be damned, it is certainly his will that you ſhould be damned. On this ſuppoſition then, you ought to be willing to be damned; for not to be willing to be damned, in this caſe, is oppoſing God's will, inſtead of ſaying, "thy will be done."

In this caſe, it is eaſy to ſee that there is no way to eſcape damnation, but by being willing to be damned, on ſuppoſition it is the will of God to caſt you off; as there is no other way to ſubmit to his will, and acquieſce in it, chooſing his will ſhould be done: Without which ſubmiſſion it is impoſſible a man ſhould be ſaved. For to make any exception, and to be willing God ſhould do as he pleaſes, *if he will ſave* you, and on no other condition, is no true ſubmiſſion to God; but a ſetting up your will to be the rule of God's conduct towards you. And to attempt to to get to heaven, or to obtain aſſurance or any

evidence that you ſhall be ſaved, in oppoſition to *ſuch a ſubmiſſion* to the will of God, without making any condition, or exception in favour of yourſelf, is to fight againſt God, and to go in the road to hell.

SEMI. I think theſe things had better be let alone, ſuppoſing there be any truth in what you advance: for ſuch a way of talking only tends to puzzle people, and to diſcourage, and perplex chriſtians; and will be of no advantage to any body.

CALV. It may puzzle and diſcourage *half-chriſtians*, who never were brought to an unreſerved ſubmiſſion to the will of God, and to deſire his glory, above all things. And it is to be wiſhed they might be ſo diſcouraged, as to be convinced that they are not real chriſtians. It may alſo puzzle ſome real chriſtians, for a time, who have never carefully attended to this matter, ſo as to compare their own feelings with this truth, when rightly underſtood: They having never viewed this point in a true light, but by their education, and the inſtructions they have had, have imbibed prejudices againſt it, as it has been repreſented, or rather *miſ*-repreſented to them. But when theſe have the truth fairly laid before them, and it is properly explained; it is to be preſumed, it will be ſo far from perplexing and diſcouraging them, that it will remove all their prejudices, and it will become a ſtrengthening, encouraging doctrine to them,

while they find their hearts in ſome meaſure, agreeing with this truth, and feel that to have God looſe his honour, and the greateſt general good not promoted; and the will of God not done, and his infinitely wiſe and good plan marred and hurt: is to them an infinitely greater evil, than their own damnation, or that of millions of others. And if they cannot be ſaved, conſiſtently with God's higheſt honour, and the greateſt good of the whole, and agreeable to the divine will and plan, there can be no ſalvation for them, which they would deſire; but are willing to be damned, if that only be conſiſtent with all this.

But let the matter be ſtated on a yet different footing, and the ſame truth, I believe, will turn up to view, and perhaps, with ſome additional evidence, if it can be made more evident. You believe, I conclude, that God will for his own glory, and the greateſt general good, puniſh many of mankind with everlaſting deſtruction.

SEMI. To be ſure.

CALV. And to this, I ſuppoſe you have no objection; but acquieſce in it, and are quite willing it ſhould be ſo, ſince it is neceſſary for the glory of God, and the greateſt good of the whole.

SEMI. Yes, ſince this is the will of God, and neceſſary to anſwer the end you have mentioned, I am willing they ſhould be miſerable forever.

CALV. And how do you know that it is not as neceſſary that you ſhould be damned to anſwer the ſame ends, as that any one elſe ſhould; and that therefore it is the will of God to damn you with them? At leaſt, we may make the ſuppoſition that this is really ſo. How do you feel on this ſtate of the caſe. Are you willing to be damned, if it be neceſſary to anſwer the ſame end, that is ſought by the damnation of others, and for the ſake of which you are willing *they* ſhould be damned?

SEMI. This is a hard queſtion, I ſuſpect there is ſome puzzle in it.

CALV. It appears to me to be a plain caſe. If there be the ſame reaſon, and the ſame neceſſity, that you ſhould be damned, as that others ſhould be caſt off; and this is a ſufficient reaſon with you to be willing *they* ſhould be damned; then *for the ſame reaſon*, you muſt be willing to be damned yourſelf, and cannot but be willing, if you feel according to reaſon, and love your neighbour as well and as much as yourſelf. You muſt, therefore, if you would not be inconſiſtent, either diſapprove of your neighbours damnation, and object to it, refuſing your conſent: or you muſt be willing to be damned, there being the ſame reaſon and neceſſity for it, as there is that your neighbour ſhould be thus puniſhed, who deſerves it no more than you. Nothing but an unreaſonable ſelfiſhneſs, and diſregard to your neighbours welfare, can make

you object to your own damnation, and conſent to his.

SEMI. I confeſs I ſee no way out, and have nothing to reply to this at preſent. But I have one thing to ſay that will prove your arguments muſt be defective ſome where though I do not ſee it at preſent. For the damned will be perfectly wicked and enemies to God forever; and it cannot be right to be willing to be abandoned to ſin and enmity againſt God, and blaſpheme his name forever. Therefore no man ought to be willing to be damned, unleſs he ought to be willing to be God's enemy, and like the devil forever; to aſſert which would be ſhocking, and no man ſurely can believe it.

CALV. This, I confeſs is a plauſible objection, and has ſo much ſeeming weight in it, that no wonder it ſhould appear to many, at the firſt view at leaſt, inſuperable and unanſwerable. But ſince it ſeems to be proved, beyond contradiction, by what has been ſaid above, that a man ought to be willing to be damned, on the ſuppoſitions which have been made; and it is impoſſible that two contradictory propoſitions ſhould be both true; we muſt not admit this objection to be unanſwerable, without carefully reviewing and examining it. And if, upon examination, it ſhall appear to be without foundation, and contrary to the truth, what has been before proved, will be yet more confirmed.

You have granted, and all muſt grant, that

we ought to be willing that ſome of our fellow men ſhould be abandoned to ſin and ruin, and be confirmed enemies to God forever: And it is plain that to acquieſce in this is ſo far from being a friend to ſin, or ſinful, or implying any enmity againſt God in our hearts, that thus to conſent to it, becauſe it is the revealed will of God, for his own glory and the general good, is an exerciſe of love to God, and his law; and of benevolence to being in general: And not to be willing, in this caſe, and to refuſe cordially to conſent to it, would be rebellion againſt God. So that there is no other way for us, not to turn enemies to God ourſelves, but to be willing that ſome of our fellow men ſhould be enemies to him forever. And why muſt not this be juſt as true in our own caſe, or ſuppoſing it is moſt for God's glory and the general good that we ſhould be given up to eternal enmity againſt God; and therefore, God hath determined we ſhould be thus given up, and ſent to hell, with others? Not to conſent to it, on this ſuppoſition, would be an act of enmity againſt God and to be an enemy to him: But to conſent to it, and be willing that God's will ſhould be done, for his own glory and the general good, would be ſo far from being friends to ſin, that it would be an exerciſe of love and friendſhip to God, and benevolence to being in general. And ſo long as we continue willing to be ourſelves with others, abandoned to ſin and ruin forever, for the reaſons

and ends mentioned, we ſhall not, we cannot be enemies to God or friends to ſin, for this implies a plain contradiction: But as ſoon as we ceaſe to be willing to be thus given up to ſin, we are given up, and turned enemies to God and all good: And the evil never can come upon us until we withdraw our ſubmiſſion, and refuſe to acquieſce in the will of God. Hence it appears that all the foregoing reaſons to prove that we ought to be willing to be damned, if this be the will of God, and for his glory and the general good, ſtand good, and equally prove that we ought to conſent to this, on this ſuppoſition; even though damnation includes a being given up to ſin and enmity againſt God forever.

Perhaps this point may be farther illuſtrated, and ſet in a more convincing light to ſome, by the inſtance of the angels, who were all created perfectly holy. It was beſt, on the whole, moſt for God's glory and the general good, that vaſt numbers of them, ſhould rebel and continue in ſin and ruin forever: And therefore it was God's will that this ſhould take place. Suppoſe this had been revealed to them, when they were all perfectly holy, and each one could not know but he was the perſon, who among others was to be given up to ſin and deſtruction; for the glory of God, and the good of the whole. How ought they to have felt on ſuch an occaſion? They muſt all conſent to the will of Jehovah, and ſay "let it take place however many of us,

or whoever of us, muſt fall into this ſinful ruined ſtate, or whatever becomes of us." If they did not thus willingly ſubmit to the will of Jehovah, they would by that, turn enemies to him, and fall into that very ſtate, and bring that evil upon themſelves, which they oppoſed, or to which they refuſed to ſubmit for the glory of God, and the general good. But ſo long as they had ſuch a ſupreme regard for the will of God, his glory and the general good as to ſay, "thy will be done, let what will come upon us," they would be ſecure from the evil; and this would be the only way to avoid it. So long as they all continued of this diſpoſition, they continued happy and holy. They, who fell into a ſtate of endleſs ſin and woe, did it by giving up ſuch a diſpoſition and indulging a contrary one; and they who continue holy and happy, do continue and perſevere in this ſtate and character, by perſevering in a ſubmiſſion to the will of God, and ſuch a regard for his glory and the general good, that they are willing to be given up to eternal ſin and ruin, if this were neceſſary to anſwer theſe ends, or if they could not remain in this holy and happy ſtate, conſiſtently with God's glory, and the greateſt good of the whole.

In a word, God thought it beſt, and therefore was willing that great numbers of angels ſhould become ſinful and miſerable forever; and all the angels before any of them fell, were like God in their diſpoſition, and choice, and there-

fore were diſpoſed to acquieſce in his will and choice, when made known to them. Conſequently had God's will been diſcovered with reſpect to this, they would all have acquieſced in it, ſo long as they were holy as God is holy. And if any one ſhould feel the leaſt reluctance to it even though he knew he was one that was to fall into ſin and ruin, he would by that reluctance and oppoſition of heart to God's will, be an enemy to God, and fall into ruin. And none could fall into that ſtate, in any poſſible way, but by oppoſing God's will or by being *unwilling* that his will ſhould be done.

SEMI. This is more puzzling yet. You carry us away to the angels, concerning whom we know but little; I chooſe to keep nearer home, and mind my own buſineſs.

CALV. If you are determined not to *think*, and will not range into any quarter of the univerſe, to get light, you will remain in darkneſs, and always be *puzzled*, with a thouſand things, while a child of fourteen years old, who has a right taſte and diſpoſition, and improves his underſtanding, as he ought, will be at no loſs about them; but will ſee them in the light of demonſtration.

Your laſt objection was, that for a man to be willing to be a confirmed enemy to God, if neceſſary for the glory of God and the general good, would be a ſinful volition; and therefore he ought not to be willing. I have undertaken to

ſhew, that this is ſo far from being true, that *not to be willing*, in the caſe propoſed, as to oppoſe this, would be a ſinful volition; and there is no other way, in order to avoid ſin, but to be willing, in this caſe, it being neceſſary to anſwer theſe ends, to be caſt off into a ſtate of perfect wickedneſs and ruin. And I think what has been ſaid amounts to a clear demonſtration, and wiſh you to review it with calmneſs and attention, and ſhew, if you can, where the argument fails, or elſe yield to the force of it, and think of it until it becomes eaſy and familiar to you.

SEMI. Your reaſonings on the ſubject ſeem to be clear and concluſive, I confeſs. At leaſt, I ſee no way at preſent to confute them. But I do not chooſe to have this matter ſettled by metaphyſical reaſoning only. I want *ſcripture* proof and evidence; for when we go by this, we are on ſure ground. I obſerve you have made but little uſe of the bible in your arguing on this point; from which I concluded you can find little to your purpoſe in that.

CALV. I have aimed to keep the ſcripture in view in all I have ſaid on this ſubject, and think I have made what is there revealed, the foundation of all my reaſonings and arguments on the points; and, that I have been, through the whole of our converſation, "reaſoning with you out of the ſcriptures." From the ſcriptures we learn that the glory of God ought to be our ultimate and higheſt end: that we are command-

ed to ſeek his glory in all we do; and therefore are forbid to deſire or purſue any thing which is contrary to his higheſt glory; and required to ſubmit to any thing and deſire it may take place, which is moſt for his glory. Therefore, on ſuppoſition it be moſt for his glory that I ſhould not be ſaved but loſt: I ought to ſubmit, and not deſire to be ſaved.

Again, the ſcripture teaches us that we ought to be all ſubmiſſion to the will of God, and always to be diſpoſed to ſay from the heart, "not my will, but thine be done." Therefore on ſuppoſition it is the will of God to caſt me off, I muſt ſay heartily, "thy will be done." Not to ſay and feel ſo, is to riſe in rebellion againſt God.

Moreover, the ſcripture requires us to love our neighbours as ourſelves. If I do ſo, and am willing God ſhould caſt any of my fellow men into hell forever, for his own glory and the general good, which I muſt be, unleſs I rebel againſt his revealed will; then I muſt be willing to be caſt off myſelf, if this be neceſſary to anſwer the ſame ends.

Theſe are the reaſons and arguments by which I have endeavoured to prove what I have advanced: And is not this arguing from ſcripture? All thoſe paſſages of ſcripture which teach us to make the glory of God our ſupreme end—To be all ſubmiſſion to his will, without making any exception, and to love our neighbour as ourſelves, all which it is difficult and

needleſs to mention, do prove and really aſſert the doctrine I have affirmed.

Beſides, I have introduced the expreſs words of Paul, ſtrongly expreſſing this to be his wiſh and deſire with reſpect to himſelf, might this be the means of ſaving his brethren.

The words of Eli expreſs the ſame ſentiment, 1 Sam. iii. 18. "It is the Lord; *let him do what ſeemeth him good.*" This he ſays with reſpect to God's awful threatening, "That he would judge his houſe forever, and that he had ſworn that the iniquity of Eli's houſe ſhould not be purged with ſacrifice nor offerings forever. And does not David expreſs the ſame thing when he ſays, 2 Samuel xv. 26. "But if he thus ſay, *I have no pleaſure in thee:* behold, here am I, let him do to me, as ſeemeth good unto him." Does he not reſign his whole intereſt, temporal and eternal, to God's pleaſure, without making any condition? If he ſay, I have no pleaſure in thee, is not this to caſt him off forever? "Behold, here I am, *let him do to me as ſeemeth good unto him.*" How could he expreſs this ſentiment in plainer and more ſtrong language?

SEMI. But what advantage will this be to me, or any one elſe? If it be true, I ſee not that it is a point worth contending about, or what will be the benefit of underſtanding and believing it.

CALV. I may aſk you, ſir, what benefit there is in oppoſing it, if it be not true? It is repreſented as a very hurtful and wicked doctrine;

and if I am not miſtaken, you conſidered it in this light, in the beginning of our converſation upon the ſubject. In this view, you thought it of importance to oppoſe it. And if it be true, the contrary error muſt be as wicked and hurtful, as this would be, were it not true. The truth will bear examination, and ought not to be given up, becauſe ſome do not underſtand it, and do oppoſe it. It certainly can do no one any hurt to believe it; but may be of great ſervice, if rightly improved; and the contrary error, I believe to be of a very bad tendency. Suffer me to illuſtrate this, in a few words—

A denial of this truth, and moſt of the arguments to ſupport ſuch denial, do miſrepreſent the nature of diſintereſted benevolence, and are really a denial of the exiſtence, of any ſuch thing: And it is ſuppoſed that ſelfiſhneſs is juſtifiable, and not oppoſed by real chriſtianity; but that chriſtians are warranted to act, and muſt act from ſelfiſh principles. This, I think, is evident, from what has been ſaid on this ſubject, and moſt of the objections you have made. This tends to give a wrong idea of true religion, and to encourage profeſſed chriſtians in the indulgence of a ſelfiſh ſpirit; and to think themſelves chriſtians, while their feelings and exerciſes, are in direct oppoſition to true chriſtianity: And this way of thinking, as I think, diſcovers a contractedneſs of mind; ſo it tends to contract it more and more, and to ſink it down to a

narrow and low way of thinking and acting, contrary to that enlargedneſs of mind, and nobleneſs of ſoul, with which real chriſtianity inſpires, and which is implied in diſintereſted benevolence.

And it is implicitly a denial of the eternal damnation of any of mankind. For, as has been obſerved, if we love our neighbour as ourſelves, which is neceſſarily implied in true holineſs, and we are unwilling to be damned ourſelves, when this is neceſſary to anſwer the ſame ends, to anſwer which they are damned; then we cannot acquieſce in their damnation; nor ought any in heaven or earth to be willing that there ſhould be any ſuch thing as damnation. Conſequently, there can be no ſuch thing, conſiſtently with the inclination of any holy being. But if this unwillingneſs to be damned ourſelves, when this is as neceſſary for the glory of God and the general good, as that any of our fellow men ſhould be damned, is owing to ſelfiſhneſs, and an exerciſe of that affection which is contrary to loving God ſupremely, and our neighbour as ourſelves; then this juſtifies ſelfiſhneſs, as has been obſerved, and juſtifies the chriſtian in avowing it, as a good and holy principle; by which he is willing others ſhould ſuffer *that* for the glory of God, which he is not willing to ſuffer were it neceſſary to anſwer the ſame end: And, in ſhort, cares not what becomes of his fellow men, or of God's honour, if he can but be ſafe

and happy. Surely that doctrine which embraces and ſupports one of theſe alternatives, and does really avow the latter, and juſtifies all the ſelfiſhneſs in the world, and ſuppoſes there is no ſuch thing as diſintereſted benevolence, is a very dangerous and hurtful doctrine, and tends to root all true religion out of the world.

On the other hand, the doctrine which I have endeavoured to explain and vindicate, tends to the advantage of chriſtians many ways, which advantages naturally come into view, by attending to what has been ſaid, of the evil conſequences of the oppoſite doctrine.

It is ſuited to enlarge the mind of the chriſtian, and to extend his ideas and thoughts to objects which are great and immenſe, and to wake up the feelings and exerciſes of diſintereſted benevolence, of ſupreme love to God, and regard to the general good, which ſwallows up and forgets his own perſonal intereſt, as nothing, in compariſon with theſe grand objects. This will help him, in the beſt and eaſieſt manner to diſtinguiſh between true religion and falſe: and to obtain, and maintain the evidence in his own mind, that he is a friend to God, and has that benevolence in which holineſs does ſummarily conſiſt.

This will prepare him to acquieſce in the eternal deſtruction of thoſe who periſh, and even to rejoice in it, as neceſſary for the glory of God, and the greateſt good of the whole, in

the exercise of that disinterested benevolence, which makes him to be willing to be one of that sinful, wretched number, were this necessary to answer these ends.

This will prevent his preaching, or talking in that *selfish* way about religion, which too many ministers, and others do; or indulging selfish affections, under the notion of their being the exercise of true religion.

A belief of this doctrine, and exercises answerable, will bring and keep in view, true, unreserved *resignation to the will of God.* And prevent his deceiving himself, with an imagined resignation which is not true resignation, but the exercise of wicked selfishness, and impiety; and with which many are deceiving themselves. For instance, when a parent looses a dear and only child, he is resigned, and willing his child should be taken from him by death, if *God will make it happy forever.* This *condition* spoils the resignation, and it expresses no true regard to God, but only a regard to his child: which the most selfish parent has, as well as the most benevolent. So one who thinks himself a christian, is willing to be poor and despised, to be sick and suffer great pain, if *it may work for his good, and God will make him eternally happy at last;* and thinks this true resignation, and that in a high and uncommon degree. Whereas this is not real resignation to the will of God, and expresses nothing but selfishness, in making God

a tool to anſwer our own ſelfiſh ends. He will conſent that God ſhould make him happy, and anſwer his ends, and is willing to be in his hands on no other condition. This expreſſes no true regard to God, or the general good. To conclude, the chriſtian who believes this truth, and has feelings and exerciſes anſwerable to it, with pleaſure gives himſelf into the hands of God, and rejoices that he and all things are in his hands, and that he will glorify himſelf by all men either in their ſalvation or damnation, and ſays, to God, "if it be moſt for thy glory that I ſhould be caſt off, thy will be done, "Father glorify thy name." I have no condition to make, let God be glorified, and his kingdom be moſt happy and glorious, whatever becomes of me." And the ſtronger and more clear theſe exerciſes are, the greater evidence he will have, when he reflects upon them; that he is a true friend to God, and that it is moſt for his glory, and for the greateſt general good, that he ſhould be perfectly holy and happy in his kingdom forever.

END OF THE DIALOGUE.

A

SERIOUS ADDRESS,

TO

PROFESSING CHRISTIANS,

IN THE NAME, AND FROM THE WORDS OF JESUS CHRIST, RECORDED

REVELATION xvi. 15.

"Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

THE warning, exhortation and encouragement here given, by Chriſt, to his profeſſed friends, ſuited to excite them to attend to their duty and faithfulneſs to him at all times, are applicable to them in whatever circumſtances and age of the world they have lived, ſince they were publiſhed: But are more eſpecially applicable to thoſe, who live in the time and circumſtances to which the words have a particular reference. In order to know what time this is, and what are the events which will then take place, the context with which theſe words are connected muſt be carefully attended to, and underſtood.

Theſe words are ſpoken by Chriſt, while John is narrating the events which were to take place under the ſixth vial while it was running. In the midſt of his narration, or before he had finiſhed it, he is interrupted, and Jeſus Chriſt ſpeaks theſe remarkable and important words; ſo that they immediately reſpect the events contained in the ſcene which was opening to John. In this chapter we have an account of the preceding vials by the angels to whom they were given. Theſe ſeven vials or cups are ſaid to be full of

the wrath of God, and to contain the ſeven laſt plagues or remarkable judgments, which were to be inflicted chiefly on the beaſt and his adherents; that is, the Pope and the hierarchy of the church of Rome, his ſupporters and followers. He was to continue one thouſand, two hundred and ſixty years, and theſe vials contained the ſeveral ſucceſſive calamities and judgments, the effects of the divine wrath, which were to be inflicted on him and his adherents during his continuance; which, in the events under the laſt vial, ſhall complete his utter deſtruction. If the time of the running of theſe ſeven vials, be computed to take up or comprehend one thouſand, two hundred and ſixty years, the time in which the beaſt is to continue, each vial will take up leſs than two hundred years. But nothing appears to confine the time of each vial to the ſame number of years. Some of the vials may comprehend more, or fewer years than others, according to the longer or ſhorter continuance of the calamitous events, which they repreſent and predict. This can be determined beſt by the time and duration of the events, which have come to paſs, and were predicted under the vials which have been poured out. A number of able expoſitors who have carefully conſulted the moſt learned, and credible hiſtorians who lived in thoſe times, have made it evident, that the events predicted under the firſt four vials took place before the reformation from popery by Luther

and Calvin, which began near the beginning of the ſixteenth century. "The fifth vial was poured out on the ſeat (throne) of the beaſt; and his kingdom was full of darkneſs, and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blaſphemed the God of heaven becauſe of their pains and their ſores, and repented not of their deeds." When the reformers aroſe and declared the pope to be anti-chriſt, and forſook the church of Rome as not the true, but an anti-chriſtian church, the mother of harlots, many became their followers, and embraced their doctrines. Men in high office, who had great power and influence, joined with the reformers and protected them, and a number of nations and kingdoms renounced the pope and his authority. By this his throne, his power and influence, which had been very high, great and univerſal, were greatly contracted and weakened, and threatened with annihilation. This greatly alarmed the pope and his party, and they exerted all their power, policy and cunning to ſuppreſs it, and deſtroy the chief promoters of it. And the emperor of Germany was excited and perſuaded, with all his power and the forces which could be raiſed, to make war on the proteſtants; but he was defeated, and great numbers of his followers were deſtroyed: And he relinquiſhed his crown and office and ſhut himſelf up in a cloiſter, and ſpent the remainder of his days in dejection and a painful melancholy and gloom.

And various other methods were taken by them to deſtroy the proteſtants, and put an end to the reformation, for more than a century; but they were continually defeated, and all the policy and craft, by which they had proſpered, and by which the pope had been exalted to univerſal dominion, now failed them, and they were involved in political darkneſs, and the painful gloom of diſappointment and defeat. Theſe were wounds and ſores which gave them unſpeakable anguiſh and pain, and could not be healed.

And they repented not of their deeds, and oppoſed all reformation in doctrine and practice. They called a council of many biſhops and inferiour clergy under a pretence of healing matters, which ſat eighteen years; but were ſo far from doing any thing towards a reformation, that they decreed a number of things which were ſtill more blaſphemous of God and divine truth. This vial was running till near the end of the ſeventeenth century.

The ſixth vial probably begun to be poured out at the latter end of the ſeventeenth century or at the beginning of the eighteenth, and has been running all the laſt century, is running now, and will continue to run to the middle of the preſent, if not longer. Some of the events, which were to take place under this vial, are deſcribed in the following words. "And the

fixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates ; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the eaſt might be prepared." In order to underſtand theſe metaphorical, typical words, it muſt be obſerved, that ancient Babylon, which was an enemy to the viſible people of God, and perſecuted and deſtroyed many of them, and ſubjected the remainder to a ſtate of grievous captivity for ſeventy years, until it was taken by the eaſtern kings of the Medes and Perſians, was a type of the antichriſtian church of Rome. Therefore this church with its appendages is repeatedly called Babylon in this book of Revelations.

The great river Euphrates run through the midſt of Babylon entering in on one ſide of it, and paſſing out on the other ſide under the walls ; and was a defence to the city, and by it they had a great ſupply of proviſion. Cyrus king of Perſia, acting in conjunction with his uncle Darius king of the Medes, took the city by turning the water of the river into another channel, which prepared the way for his army to march in under the walls where the river uſed to run, and was now dried up : in this way they entered the city, ſlew the king and chief men, and took poſſeſſion of it, which iſſued in its final deſtruction.

The prophecy before us has an alluſion to this type and figurative repreſentation in predicting the fall of ſpiritual Babylon, and the manner in which it was to be effected. By drying up the river Euphrates is meant the removal or diminution of whatever has been the great and chief ſupport of the pope, and the church of which he is the head. And this chiefly conſiſts in the ſtrength and power which he has in various ways, and by different inſtruments, obtained, eſpecially by the ſtream of money and riches which have been made, by various means, to flow into that church for many ages from all parts of chriſtendom. This ſtream has been in a conſiderable meaſure dried up in the laſt century, by the nations withholding much of the money which uſed to flow into that church like a great river, and turning it into another channel. And the order and ſociety of Jeſuits, which has been a ſtrong pillar and ſupport of that church many ways, has been demoliſhed and taken away in the laſt century. And what has been done in the latter part of that century in pulling down and impoveriſhing the pope and the church of Rome, by which it has fallen almoſt to the ground, is notorious to all.

By the kings of the Eaſt are meant all thoſe, in whatever part of the world they live, and whoever they are, who are enemies to the ſpiritual Babylon, and ſeek to pull down and deſtroy it,

typified by the kings of the eaſt, who fought againſt and ſubdued the ancient, literal Babylon.

The late revolution in France, by which the church of Rome is again introduced there by an agreement between the chief conſul and the pope, at a firſt and ſuperficial view, may appear to be a revival of the cauſe of that church, and a ſtep toward the pope's riſing to his former height. But when the ſubject is carefully examined it will doubtleſs appear otherwiſe. The chief conſul really claims, and has obtained the power in France, and in other ſtates, over which he claims a juriſdiction, which the pope uſed to claim; and the latter is only made a tool by the former, to anſwer his own ambitious purpoſes. It may ſoon appear that this event was the only proper ſtep to effect the utter ruin of the pope and of that church. Be that as it may, we are ſure that this ſpiritual Babylon will fall to the ground under the vial which is now running, and the ſucceeding one, and that all the ſucceeding events will iſſue in its utter overthrow, though the particular ſteps which will be taken to effect this, cannot be known and deſcribed, as they are future, any farther than they are revealed in ſcripture prophecy.

There is a prophecy in the book of Daniel, which illuſtrates the caſe before us. In deſcribing the fourth beaſt, which now conſiſts of the

pope and the hierarchy of the church of Rome, he ſays, "And whereas thou ſaweſt the feet and toes, part of potters clay, and part of iron, the kingdom ſhall be divided. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, ſo the kingdom ſhall be partly ſtrong, and partly broken. And whereas thou ſaweſt iron mixt with miry clay, they ſhall mingle themſelves with the ſeed of men: But they ſhall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

This prophecy has doubtleſs been fulfilled in other inſtances, but is eminently ſo in the *concordate* between the chief conſul of France and the pope, in which the latter attempts to unite with the ſeed of men, the men of the world, who are apparent infidels and real enemies to chriſtianity, even as it conſiſts in popery, unleſs when they can anſwer their own ends by it. By this the pope has not ſtrengthened, but weakened his cauſe, and prepared the way to be daſhed in pieces, by the ſtone cut out of the mountain without hands; to be deſtroyed by Chriſt.

John goes on to relate what he further ſaw in viſion as taking place under this ſixth vial. "And I ſaw three unclean ſpirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beaſt, and out of the mouth of the falſe prophet. For they are the ſpirits of devils, working miracles (or doing wonders)

which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." While the beaſt and the hierarchy of the falſe church of Rome, here called the falſe prophet, who is elſe where deſcribed as the great harlot, ſitting on the beaſt, who is the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth; while theſe are ſinking and expiring, they, in conjunction with the old dragon, the devil, who had been the great inviſible agent in ſetting them up and ſupporting them, and by whom they were always inſpired, emit a filthy ſpawn, a moſt miſchievous progeny, which are no other than the ſpirits of devils, which ruſh forth to the kings of the earth, and the inhabitants of the whole world, to corrupt the world, and promote all manner of wickedneſs in principle and practice, in rebellion againſt Chriſt and his goſpel. And in doing this they will effect wonderful events, which were not expected, and never had been in ſuch a manner and degree. By this they will arm mankind in general, eſpecially thoſe in the chriſtian world, againſt God and the Redeemer, and unite and gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. The beaſt and harlot will live in theſe times, and not become extinct till this battle comes on.

This *gathering* to the battle, does not mean a local collection into one place; but a general

agreement among the nations, to oppoſe Jeſus Chriſt and the goſpel, in principle and practice, and thus arming themſelves againſt God, by which they will be prepared for the battle, which will not conſiſt in any particular combat with carnal weapons, between chriſtians and thoſe who oppoſe them: but in the judgments and deſtruction, which God will inflict on the open and incorrigible enemies of Chriſt and his church, by which they and their cauſe will be amply vindicated and avenged, and deſerved wrath and vengeance will be inflicted on their enemies, to the uttermoſt. This battle will commence in the fulneſs of it when the ſeventh vial ſhall be poured out, when by the events which take place under the ſixth vial: the body of the inhabitants of the world will be ripened for the puniſhment and vengeance by which they ſhall be deſtroyed; which battle is deſcribed in the latter part of this, and the nineteenth chapters.

While theſe evil ſpirits are doing their work and are uſing all their influence to arm wicked men and unite them againſt Chriſt, he ſtands forth and ſpeaks in the words now under conſideration; and certainly ſpeaks them with reference to the events predicted in this viſion, reſpecting this battle, and the events preparatory to it; and therefore are ſpoken to thoſe profeſſing chriſtians who live in theſe days, as a warning, direction and encouragement to them. And if

we live in the very time pointed out in this viſion, it concerns us to know it, and earneſtly attend to, and conſcientiouſly improve theſe words of Chriſt, as the only way to be ſafe and bleſſed.

It becomes chriſtians to diſcern and know the ſigns of the times in which they live: To attend to the events of divine providence compared with ſcripture; with diſcerning and judgment to view the ſtate of religion and morality in the world, ſo far as they are under advantages to extend their knowledge of theſe important concerns. And they have opportunity, which they ought diligently to improve, to compare the circumſtances and particular events of the times, in which they live with the prophetic part of ſcripture, to find, if they can, with a degree of ſatisfaction and certainty, the agreement of the events which are before their eyes, with the predictions of ſcripture; and, hereby learn what is their particular duty, and what is come and coming in the world, as it reſpects the moral corruption and conſequent miſery of mankind, and the depreſſed ſtate of chriſtianity, and the final victory it ſhall obtain.

That we live in the time when the ſixth vial is poured out, which has been running during the laſt century, or longer, is evident from ſcripture prophecy, as has been obſerved, and is abundantly confirmed and rendered certain by the

events which have taken place in the laſt century, and are now coming to paſs before our eyes; which were predicted under this vial. The river Euphrates, agreeable to the explication now given, has been drying up for many years, and the church of Rome is impoveriſhed and weakened many ways, by which the way has been opened for her enemies, whoever and wherever they be, to aſſault and deſtroy her, and ſhe has ſunk in a manner which never took place before, as has been obſerved. And while this old harlot, who is the mother of all the abominations in the earth, who rides on the beaſt, ſupported by the old dragon the devil, is falling and expiring, they three, join to emit and ſend forth evil ſpirits like themſelves, which muſt therefore be ſpirits of devils, which go forth to corrupt the world, ſo as to arm the people in general againſt God, in a ſtate of open and high rebellion againſt the Redeemer. And is not all this now taking place, which began many years ago, and is now increaſing in a remarkable and rapid progreſs? Let chriſtians, who have diſcerning to know the times, attend and judge.

In the laſt century there has been a greater ſpread and prevalence of error, infidelity, and all kinds of immorality and wickedneſs, than was ever before known; and that in a manner and by means new and ſtrange. Men of great abilities and learning have riſen up champions

for infidelity, and conſequently for vice and immorality. And ſecret ſocieties have been formed and combined to do every thing in their power to put an end to chriſtianity, and every inſtitution that would lay any reſtraint on their luſts. To this end they ſpread their emiſſaries wherever there is a proſpect of the gaining proſelytes. They introduce themſelves and their diſciples as teachers of ſchools, and into colleges, and the courts of princes and kings, to proſelyte as many of the great as they can. They have been detected, and their doctrines and ſchemes have been expoſed to the public; but this has not diſcouraged them; and through the connivance of the great and obſequiouſneſs of the multitude, they have gone on to practiſe and proſper. In their unwearied exertions and attempts they turned their attention particularly to France, and were ſo ſucceſsful as to influence a great part of the leading men there, and a number in the kings court to embrace their principles and ſcheme, which produced a revolution in that nation, by which chriſtianity and all the inſtitutions of it were aboliſhed, and infidelity introduced in the room of it: In the preſence of the National Convention, a man of note aroſe and declared he was an atheiſt, that there was no God but liberty, &c. which gained the approbation and loud applauſe of the whole convention. And a number of prieſts appeared in the hall of the convention, and caſt off the garments

and the badges of their ſacerdotal office, and thus publicly in this contemptuous manner renounced chriſtianity; and in a literal ſenſe and moſt expreſsly put off their chriſtian garments themſelves inſtead of keeping them. The leaders in this ſcheme, in their endeavours to overthrow chriſtianity, eſpouſe and propagate among their diſciples this maxim, "that any means neceſſary or tending to promote a good end, cannot be wrong, but muſt be right and commendable." Hence, as they propoſe the total abolition of chriſtianity, as neceſſary for the happineſs of mankind and of their own, and therefore the higheſt and beſt end, they conſider any means which they can practiſe, and in their view are ſuited to anſwer this end, to be right and laudable. Conſequently, when the groſſeſt hypocriſy, fraud, lying, cheating, murder, and even ſelf-murder, or any vice which can be mentioned, are in their view neceſſary or needful to anſwer this end they are to be practiſed, without the leaſt remorſe of conſcience. Therefore when they think it the beſt way for them to injure chriſtianity, they will appear zealous advocates for it, and aſſert and deny any thing, however contrary to the truth, when they think it will anſwer their ends. There have been volumes written in Europe by men, whoſe learning, knowledge and veracity cannot be reaſonably queſtioned, who have detected and abundantly proved theſe things, and many more groſs immoralities to be practiſed and

promoted by the leaders in this iniquitous ſcheme to cruſh chriſtianity.

While infidelity has ſpread in Europe, vice and groſs immorality have kept pace with it. In France eſpecially, theſe prevail to an extent and degree never known before. This is ſupported by the moſt credible teſtimony. And as far as their armies have carried their conqueſts, which have been rapid and extenſive, they have ſpread the principles of infidelity, and the practice of immorality to a degree never known before ſince chriſtianity was received by thoſe nations. This is abundantly teſtified by the learned and pious in Europe. And multitudes of thoſe, who do not profeſſedly renounce chriſtianity, embrace thoſe doctrines which are ſo contrary to the goſpel, as to lead to infidelity, and really are no better. While the multitude of common people are ſunk into vice, careleſſneſs about religion, and ignorance of the nature and true doctrines of it. Can any one who takes a proper and attentive view of all this, doubt that the evil ſpirits, the ſpirits of devils have been let looſe with an extraordinary commiſſion to corrupt mankind, eſpecially the chriſtian world, during the laſt century, and are ſtill progreſſing, with uncommon power and rapidity, agreeable to the prophecy before us?

America has not eſcaped the fangs of theſe

unclean ſpirits of devils. There are traces and fruits of their operation, which muſt be ſtrikingly viſible to all who do not wilfully ſhut their eyes. There was indeed a remarkable and general attention to religion in America, particularly in New-England about the middle of the laſt century; and a number were hopefully converted. But a great part of the profeſſed ſubjects of this revival were ſo imprudent and irregular in their converſation and conduct; and ſo many apoſtatized to error, irreligion and vice, that, on the whole it tended to ſtrengthen the prejudices of many againſt religion, and was the means of leading many to infidelity, under the inviſible influence of ſatan. Since that, infidelity, irreligion and vice have increaſed, but the firſt of theſe not ſo openly but in a great meaſure ſecretly and under cover. But in the latter part of the laſt century many European infidels were introduced to America, who diſſeminated their infidel principles by converſation, and ſpreading books written againſt divine revelation. One man in Europe wrote a pamphlet againſt the bible, which is reprinted and ſpread in America, and was read with avidity by multitudes, both youth and others; and gave a turn in their ignorant and already vitiated minds in favour of infidelity. And a number of books and pamphlets have been publiſhed againſt chriſtianity, and in favour of deiſm and atheiſm which are ſpreading and highly approved by many. And ſocieties

are formed compoſed of infidels, who are aſſiduous in doing all they can ſecretly, and by any means in their power, to diſcredit and root out chriſtianity and all religion and morality. This is a wonderful and in ſome ſenſe and degree a miraculous event. That in a chriſtian land, where the body of the people were friendly to chriſtianity there ſhould be ſuch a great and ſudden change in favour of infidelity, and ſuch great and unwearied exertions to promote it, in a manner and degree which never were experienced before in the chriſtian world. It cannot be accounted for, but by ſuppoſing it to be produced by that inviſible agency of evil ſpirits on the corrupt hearts of men, which is in the prophecy before us, predicted to take place at this time; and is a certain and undeniable evidence that this prophecy is now fulfilling; and is therefore a demonſtration of the truth of chriſtianity, which infidelity is attempting to deſtroy. And that though it may ſeem for a time to prevail, it, with the promoters of it, will ſoon and unexpectedly be deſtroyed, and chriſtianity will revive, proſper and triumph.

It is proper to attend to ſome other things not only as a further evidence, if needed, that theſe ſpirits of devils are now among us, and producing great effects before our eyes; but that they are making rapid progreſs and have not yet finiſhed, but have only begun their work. There

are a number of circumſtances and events taking place favourable to the cauſe of infidelity and vice, and leading to the progreſs of theſe, which it is not prudent or needful particularly to mention; which are in the full view of thoſe chriſtians who have their eyes open. There is an apparent general decay and neglect of religion among thoſe who do not in words expreſsly renounce chriſtianity, but think themſelves friends to it. There is a prevailing indifference and careleſſneſs about religion, and conſequently ignorance of the nature and doctrines of it. The churches are generally ſmall, by far the greater part of the people neglect to join them. And many, if not moſt of the members of churches are luke warm; ignorant or erroneous, if not immoral; and the diſcipline of moſt churches is very lax, if not wholly laid aſide. The ſabbath is neglected and profaned as it never was before, eſpecially in New-England: and public worſhip is greatly neglected; and family religion is generally and almoſt univerſally laid aſide, and parental government, and religious education and inſtruction of their children and domeſtics, have almoſt wholly ceaſed. Conſequently a general ignorance in religion, and the practice of vice take place. Some of the important truths of the goſpel are neglected and oppoſed, and many errors imbibed, which really ſubvert the goſpel, and have a direct and ſtrong tendency to infidelity and atheiſm, as may, perhaps, be more particularly conſidered hereafter.

In this ſituation of affairs, public and private, there is a ſtrong tendency to univerſal infidelity and atheiſm: and we are ripening faſt for it. If God do not prevent; to which mercy we have no claim: but rather are provoking him to give us up to the luſts of our hearts, to run on to the moſt groſs infidelity, and all manner and degrees of vice and wickedneſs, which will introduce great temporal miſery and wretchedneſs, and bring on utter and eternal deſtruction. And they who will keep their chriſtian garments will ſuffer ſhame and reproach, and innumerable other evils, and it may be the moſt cruel death that evil men can invent and inflict.

All things will go faſt on to this iſſue, unleſs prevented by the interpoſition of divine power and grace, which we are ſure will not be done till mankind in general are reſolutely and fully armed againſt Chriſt, prepared for the battle, and ripe for deſtruction, from the prophecy under conſideration. How long time this is yet to take, none can with preciſion tell. It will continue till the ſixth vial is expended, which, as has been obſerved, will yet run, moſt probably, for half a century, or more. But it is worthy obſervation, that the vials may not be ſo perfectly diſtinct, as to wholly run out before the next, in a meaſure, begins. Under the ſeventh vial the great battle which Jeſus Chriſt will carry on againſt ſatan and a wicked world armed againſt

him, will come on in the full ſtrength of it, and will continue, till by the expreſſions of the divine anger, in inflicting various and dreadful ſucceſſive judgments, of which no particular, and full deſcription can now be given; or any adequate idea be formed of them, till they ſhall take place, the obſtinately wicked ſhall be deſtroyed and ſwept from off the earth, having drank the dregs of this dreadful cup which is in the hand of the Lord, and wrung them out [Pſalm lxxv. 8.] But ſome drops of this vial may fall upon the world, in ſome parts of it, before the time is come to pour it out without reſtraint or mixture, and before the events predicted under the ſixth vial are finiſhed, but while that vial is yet running. Sore calamities and awful deſtructions, may be inflicted in many places, and at different times, as a teſtimony of the diſpleaſure of God with the wickedneſs of men, and a warning to the world of the greater calamities and certain deſtruction which are coming on mankind, unleſs they repent. The great and remarkable calamities which have been lately felt in France and other parts of Europe, while infidelity and wickedneſs have been increaſing and ſpreading, may be conſidered to be of this kind, and as a warning to the world, and to the United States of America in particular. And as great, if not more dreadful judgments will doubtleſs be inflicted on theſe ſtates before the ſixth vial is ended, as a warning and call to repentance.

It is doubtleſs thought by ſome profeſſing chriſtians that the above repreſentation of the ſtate of religion, and the proſpect with reſpect to it in America, is not juſt. There have been lately remarkable revivals of religion in many places and parts of the United States, and great numbers hopefully converted, and a number of deiſts have renounced their infidelity and become chriſtians. And not a few men of judgment and obſervation have thought that religion is rather in a progreſſive ſtate than otherwiſe.

Upon this it is obſerved, that there is reaſon of much thankfulneſs that there have been ſo many remarkable revivals of religion of late, and that ſuch a number have been hopefully converted. But this number is preſumed to be much leſs than the reſt of the inhabitants of moſt, if not all, of the places where theſe revivals have taken place; and when compared with the number of inhabitants of theſe ſtates it will appear that theſe converts bear but a very ſmall proportion to the whole, and thoſe which make the body of the people have in general received no benefit by theſe revivals, but the contrary: They are more hardened in impenitence, vice and infidelity; ſo that there may be and doubtleſs is an increaſe, on the whole, of infidelity and wickedneſs, notwithſtanding theſe revivals. Jeſus Chriſt will have and maintain his church in the midſt of the greateſt oppoſition to it, and in or-

der to this ſinners muſt be converted, more or leſs, and raiſed up as witneſſes to his truth and cauſe. And theſe revivals are a warning and loud call to all the people to repent, whether they will hear or not. In the mean time, there is no evidence that they will increaſe or continue.

It is alſo ſuppoſed by ſome that the cauſe of infidelity is rather on the decline in this nation, and that diſbelievers now think more favourably of chriſtianity than they did ſometime ago, as they are leſs open, bold and noiſy in oppoſition to it, than they were: and ſome of them ſpeak in favour of it at times.

To this it may be replied, that ſuch a change of diſbelievers, in appearance and conduct, may not be the leaſt evidence that they are really more friendly to the goſpel, as a revelation from heaven, than they have been, or that their cauſe is on the decline and does not increaſe in ſtrength and numbers. This may be in their view, the beſt way they can take to ſupport their cauſe and carry on their ſcheme, and they will turn into any ſhape, and ſay any thing which they think will beſt anſwer this end, as has been obſerved. Beſides, in the political conteſt which now ſubſiſts in the United States, in both parties of which there are doubtleſs diſbelievers in divine revelation, there are a variety of circumſtances, which need not be mentioned, which do operate as a

reſtraint upon infidels in different ways who are on either ſide to produce the effect mentioned, conſiſtently with their being as much engaged as ever in the cauſe of infidelity, and their proſpect of ſucceſs.

The foregoing has been deſigned to point out the ſigns of this time, and to ſhow that the Saviour has particular reference to the events which are now taking place before our eyes, and others which are ſoon to follow, in his words under conſideration; and that, therefore, they are ſpoken, in a particular and ſpecial manner to thoſe profeſſed chriſtians, who are now on the ſtage of life, and to all of this denomination who ſhall live before the ſeventh vial ſhall be poured out.

The following will conſiſt in an explanation of theſe words, and a practical improvement of them, ſuited to excite the attention of all profeſſed friends of chriſtianity to the warning, threat, command, encouragement and promiſe contained in them, and to induce them to regard and practiſe what is here recommended by the glorious head of the church as the only way to ſafety and happineſs.

"Behold, I come as a thief." This is introduced with a note of attention. Behold! This denotes that what Chriſt is going to ſpeak is of

great importance, and demands the ſerious and cloſe attention of all who have ears to hear. The coming of Chriſt is often ſpoken of in ſcripture, and intends various and different times and manners of his coming; and he is often ſaid to come as a thief, to denote not the end of his coming, but the circumſtances and manner of his coming. The thief comes to do miſchief and ſteal. Chriſt comes to accompliſh the wiſeſt and beſt ends. And though he often comes in judgment, to inflict evil, yet he never injures any, and he always deſigns kindneſs and mercy to his church. But he comes as a thief, that is unperceived, and while his coming is not thought of by the men of the world, and by all who are ſpiritually aſleep whether profeſſing chriſtians or not. His coming is perceived and realized by none but thoſe who are awake and on the watch.

The coming of Chriſt here ſeems to comprehend two events which are nearly connected together, and in ſome ſenſe one, viz. the gathering of the people to the battle by the influence of evil ſpirits; and his coming to the battle, and carrying it on till it is finiſhed. Chriſt really comes by and with his enemies, when they riſe, oppoſe and attempt to deſtroy his church. He ſuperintends and directs the whole, and his hand and preſence is to be ſeen in all the tranſactions and events which are accompliſhed by wicked

agents, whether viſible or inviſible. This is intimated in the words immediately following. "And *he* gathered them together into a place, called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon." *He*, that is Chriſt, gathered them together. This is ſaid to denote the ſuperintendance and agency of Chriſt in gathering them together, while men and devils are active in producing the ſame event. Thus when the king of Aſſyria gathered a great army together with an intent to invade and lay waſte the land of Judah and Jeruſalem, God ſays he ſent him to accompliſh his purpoſe; and that the king and his army were in his hand, and under his influence and direction, as much as the ſaw and ax are in the hand of the workman. And when the falſe prophets were deceived, and flattered Ahab that he ſhould proſper in going to war, in which his army was conquered, and he loſt his own life, it is ſaid the Lord put a lying ſpirit in the mouth of all theſe falſe prophets. So Chriſt is ſaid to come with the Romans when they gathered their army to deſtroy Jeruſalem.

Jeſus Chriſt is therefore now come and coming in all the remarkable, unexpected wonderful events which are taking place under the ſixth vial, by the agency of men and devils. He ſuperintends and directs the whole until all things are prepared for the battle of the great day of God Almighty, and he has gathered together the

army of his enemies. Then he will come to battle, and deſtroy his enemies, and deliver his church, and cauſe it to proſper as it never has done before. But in all this coming of Chriſt none will be properly ſenſible of it or prepared for it but thoſe who are awake, watch and keep their garments, to the reſt he comes as a thief.

"Bleſſed is he that watcheth." When he that watcheth, &c. is pronounced *bleſſed* it ſuppoſes that none who are not of this character are bleſſed, but the contrary; to watch, in the ſenſe of the text, is to be ſpiritually awake, to look inward, and view their own motions and moral exerciſes, and on their outward conduct to learn on whoſe ſide they are; and to look round and diſcern the ſtate and condition of the cauſe of Chriſt in the world; what is the moral ſtate of the world, what the enemies to chriſtianity are doing; what is their apparent ſtrength, and ſucceſs in their cauſe; and what appears to have come to paſs, and to be ſoon coming, from divine prophecy; and to be concerned to be in readineſs to do all they can, and whatever they are called to do for the cauſe of Chriſt, and in oppoſition to that of his enemies.

"Bleſſed is he that keepeth his garments." This ſeems to be an alluſion to a ſoldier ſet on the watch in the time of war and danger, when the army to which he belongs is ſurrounded, and

threatened to be invaded and conquered by a hoſt of enemies. His duty is to continue awake, and obſerve the motion of the enemy, &c. If he put off the livery of a ſoldier, and lie down to ſleep, he may be ſurprized by the enemy and obliged to run away naked, or will fall into the hands of his foes and be carried off by them. In the ſpiritual warfare, in which every chriſtian is engaged, every one muſt be continually on the watch, and keep on him the livery of a chriſtian ſoldier, and never on any occaſion put theſe garments off and lay them aſide. Watching and keeping his garments imply each other, and cannot be ſeparated. He who doth watch keepeth his garments, and he who keepeth his garments, watcheth.

The garments of a chriſtian, by which he is diſtinguiſhed from all others, and are the chriſtian livery, conſiſt in the knowledge and practice of *the truth*, in which he "puts on Chriſt," and is conformed to him in heart and conduct, wherein he has ſet an example to be imitated, and embraces the truth, the doctrines he taught, and commands he has enjoined, both in the exerciſes of his heart and in his converſation and conduct. This is to be clothed with every chriſtian grace and virtue, of which a very important one is humility. The whole is comprehended in *love*, in putting on charity, that is love, and walking in love. This compriſes the whole of the chriſ-

tian character, and the garments with which he is clothed. None but true chriſtians, as has been obſerved do put on theſe garments in reality; but many others do put them on by profeſſion and in appearance in the ſight of men. The latter often in times of temptation do not keep their garments; but fall from their profeſſion or apoſtatize in conduct ſo as to diſcover their ſhame. And real chriſtians are in ſuch danger of looſing their garments, that it is neceſſary for them to watch and exert themſelves to keep them, leſt they ſhould walk naked, &c.

But it is of importance that theſe chriſtian garments ſhould be more particularly deſcribed, and to ſhow how they may be kept, and what is neceſſary to do it, and in what ways they may be ſoiled, or put off and loſt. The chriſtian has put on Jeſus Chriſt, he is clothed with him, by imbibing the ſame ſpirit that is in him; by ſincere and ardent love to him, union and conſtant, and cloſe adherence to him and truſt in him for all he wants; a cordial, ſtrong devotedneſs to him, his ſervice, intereſt and cauſe, as the great and only intereſt worthy to be ſought and purſued, in which his heart is principally engaged and ſwallowed up. Conſequently, whatever is contrary to, and oppoſes the honour and intereſt of his dear Lord and Maſter, he is quick to diſcern; and he moſt ſenſibly feels it, and is diſpoſed to oppoſe it in all proper ways, whatever he muſt

be led to ſacrifice for it, not excepting his own life. All this is neceſſary for a chriſtian to keep his garments. Jeſus Chriſt has expreſsly aſſerted this. He who is only a viſible, profeſſing chriſtian, is not thus a friend to Chriſt, and really cares nothing about his honour or intereſt, and may really put off the garments of a chriſtian and betray the cauſe of Chriſt, while, through his inſenſibility, and want of love to Chriſt and his cauſe, or a contrary diſpoſition, he is wholly inſenſible of it. And when he cannot continue his chriſtian profeſſion without endangering his life, or in ſome way hurting his temporal intereſt, he will part with this viſible chriſtian garment, or do that which is equivalent.

This love, without which there can be really no part of theſe chriſtian garments, alſo, carries in the nature of it a peculiar and ſtrong union to the friends of Chriſt, as they are clothed with the ſame garments, *love*, in all its branches, and with one heart and ſoul engaged in the ſame cauſe. When a profeſſed chriſtian walks diſorderly and is the cauſe of ſtrife and contention in the church, he does not keep his garments, but ſo far puts them off. Hence the ground and neceſſity of chriſtian diſcipline, in the exerciſe of this love; in the total neglect of which chriſtians do not keep, but fully and loſe their garments. And the chriſtian cannot wear or keep his garments without exerciſing benevolence to his fel-

low men, in general, by doing good to all men as he has opportunity.

In order to have a ſtill more clear and full idea of the garments, and how he may keep or looſe them, they muſt be conſidered as they conſiſt in the armour by which he defends himſelf, mantains his ground, and obtains the victory, in his warfare with his enemies. In this view the clothing neceſſary for a chriſtian as a ſoldier of Chriſt and engaged in a warfare under him, in which ſituation he is conſidered in the words before us muſt be put on. This clothing is often mentioned in ſcripture; but moſt particularly deſcribed by the apoſtle Paul in the concluſion of his letter to the church at Epheſus. Which ought to be often read, underſtood and committed to memory, by every chriſtian. After deſcribing the vaſt number, ſubtilty and power of their inviſible, ſpiritual enemies, he calls upon chriſtians to arm themſelves, "to put on the whole armour of God," in order to withſtand theſe enemies, "in the evil day." The apoſtles and primitive chriſtians lived in an evil day, and all the days of chriſtians in every age ſince have been evil in a ſenſe and degree greater or leſs. They had the devil, and all the men whom he is allowed to influence and ſtir up to hate and perſecute them, to oppoſe. But the time in which we live, and is yet coming on, is in a peculiar ſenſe and degree evil, as theſe evil ſpirits have a

particular and large commiſſion to go forth, and by their influence to ſtir up men in general, at leaſt in the chriſtian world, in zealous and ſtrong attempts againſt Chriſt, and to deſtroy chriſtianity and the church. And to what lengths they will be permitted to proceed, and what particular deeds, in their ſeeking to deſtroy chriſtians, they will be ſuffered to do, at preſent none can certainly know. It is enough for us to know that they will do what God has deſigned they ſhall, and proceed till they have filled the meaſure of their iniquity, and are completely ripe, and fitted for the deſtruction which ſhall come upon them in the battle of that great day; and that *they* are and ſhall be bleſſed who watch and keep their garments, having put on the whole armour of God. Since all this is true, there is a particular and loud call to all profeſſed chriſtians to put on this armour, and be prepared for whatever is coming even the worſt, however ſudden and unexpected it may come; and be unſeen and not thought of, till ſudden deſtruction come upon them and they ſhall not eſcape.

Let chriſtians then ſtand, having their loins girt about with *truth*. By truth is meant that ſcheme and plan of important, conſiſtent connected truth revealed in the bible. This is often denominated *the truth* in diſtinction from all error, and every ſcheme of doctrine which men have invented, or may or can invent, which

though they may contain ſome things which are true; yet there is ſo much error and falſehood mixed with it, as to ſpoil the whole, and render it wholly inconſiſtent and ruinous. In oppoſition to this, the doctrines of revelation are called *the truth*, pure, important, ſaving truth, without any the leaſt mixture of error. They who know and embrace *this truth*, and not any others, are and ſhall be ſaved. They only love the truth, walk in the truth, and by love are united to all who appear to know, love the truth, and walk in it. This is the truth of which Jeſus Chriſt ſpeaks when he ſays to Pilate, "To this end was I born, and for this cauſe came I into the world, that I ſhould bear witneſs unto *the truth*."

The apoſtle repreſents this truth by a girdle, by which a man girds himſelf and ties up his looſe garments, by which he is fitted for action. The girdle was then conſidered as an eſſential part of clothing; eſpecially for thoſe who were engaged in warfare. And in the caſe before us fitly repreſents the truth, by which the chriſtian is ſtrengthened, and all his garments are made tight, without which he cannot take one ſtep. A proper girdle, to anſwer the end for ſtrength and ornament, muſt conſiſt of one ſort of materials, ſtrongly united together into one belt or ſtring, without any chaſm or weak place, by which it may become two, or fall into parts. So the truth by which the chriſtian is girded is,

perfectly connected together. The whole makes but one girdle; and one part cannot be taken out without ſpoiling the whole. If it be conſidered as compoſed of ſeveral links, all harmonious, and of one and the ſame ſort ſtrongly connected and implying and depending upon each other; if one of the links be marred or broken and taken out, the girdle is marred and ſpoiled, and is not fit or capable of girding the loins of a chriſtian. If one eſſential truth of the goſpel which is comprehended in *the truth*, be denied or left out of the chriſtian's creed, it is not a chriſtian girdle, but like the girdle which the prophet Jeremiah hid in a hole in a rock by Euphrates, it is marred and good for nothing.*

* Numbers will ſay, "Many often ſpeak of *eſſential doctrines*: but it has never yet been determined and agreed what theſe eſſential doctrines are; ſo that to ſpeak of eſſential truths, leaves the matter as vague and uncertain as ever; for none can tell, and chriſtians cannot agree to ſay what they are."

Anſwer. It may be aſked, who they are who make this objection, and talk after this manner? Are they thoſe who give proper and good evidence that they are born again of the ſpirit of God and of truth? Do they appear to have that holy love which they only exerciſe who are born of God, and by which alone they know God? The apoſtle John ſays, "he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us." 1 John iv. 6, 7, 8. And Chriſt ſays, the ſame, "To this end was I born, and for this cauſe came I into the world, that I ſhould bear witneſs unto *the truth*. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." John xviii. 37. They who are not of this character, but of the contrary, do not hear the voice of Chriſt, or the words of the apoſtles. They know not God, "They receive not the things of the ſpirit of God: for they are fooliſhneſs unto them; neither can they know them, becauſe they are ſpirit-

The apoſtle adds, "and having on the breaſt-plate of righteouſneſs." Here by righteouſneſs is meant true holineſs or uprightneſs of heart by which the chriſtian is guarded and fortified againſt the aſſaults of ſatan. This is indeed implied in having his loins girt about with truth, as every part of armour here mentioned is implied in the other, and each one really implies the whole, for one cannot be put on without the other. It

ually diſcerned." 1 Cor. ii. 14. They hate the truth, and will not come to it. John iii. 19, 20. No wonder that ſuch are in the dark and cannot tell what is eſſential truth, or what is the truth.

But there have been thouſands and millions who being born again have come to the knowledge of the truth, and have been united in embracing the truth, and in what are the eſſential truths of the goſpel. And there have been and are innumerable chriſtian churches, who agree in a creed which they believe and are ſure contains the eſſential truths contained in divine revelation. Which are, in ſubſtance, the following.

That there is one God poſſeſſing all poſſible perfections, both natural and moral, which are infinite and unchangeable: conſequently he is unchangeable in his will and deſigns or decrees, by which all things from the greateſt to the leaſt which ſhould take place were determined and fixed; and that perfectly conſiſtent with the freedom of all moral agents.

That God ſubſiſts in a trinity of three, called in the ſcripture the Father, the Son, or the Word, and the Holy Spirit.

That mankind who were made upright have in conſequence of the ſin of Adam, fallen into a ſtate of total moral depravity, being dead in treſpaſſes and ſin.

That God has determined to ſave ſome, not all of mankind, whom he has choſen out of the reſt and given them to the Son to be ſaved by him. That Chriſt the Saviour is God manifeſt in the fleſh, and has by his ſuffering, and obedience made atonement for ſin, and obtained that merit and right-

is a *whole* armour: It all hangs together, as one whole. The breaſt-plate of righteouſneſs joined with the loins girded with truth, diſtinguiſhes the latter from that which is ſpurious and falſe. The apoſtle had ſpoken of thoſe who "hold the truth in *unrighteouſneſs*." He here ſpeaks of directly the contrary, holding the truth *in righteouſneſs*; which is, receiving it into an honeſt and good heart. Men may hold the truth in ſome part of it, if not the whole, in ſpeculation, while their hearts are neither good or honeſt, but hate and oppoſe it. This is to hold it in unrighteouſneſs, as they do not put on the breaſt-plate of righteouſneſs; neither are their loins girt about with truth.

eouſneſs, by which ſinners may be pardoned, juſtified and ſaved conſiſtently with the righteous law and government of God.—That the ſinner who believes in Chriſt is juſtified, by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt and not on account of any thing good and deſerving in himſelf. That in order to believe on Chriſt, men muſt be born again by the ſpirit of God, which God of his ſovereign grace effects in the hearts of the elect, who being juſtified by faith, ſhall perſevere in holineſs to eternal life.—That the law of God requiring perfect obedience and holineſs, is binding on all men both ſaints and ſinners, which none attain to in this life.

That there will be a reſurrection of all the bodies both of the juſt and unjuſt; when all ſhall be judged by Chriſt, who will invite the former into his eternal kingdom, to be holy and happy forever; and will ſentence the latter to everlaſting puniſhment.

There are many truths not expreſſed but implied in the above creed, and numerous things which may be called appendages to it, in the knowledge of which the attentive diſcerning chriſtian, who embraces the foregoing fundamental doctrines, will make advances, as he grows in grace and in the knowledge of his Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

The truth, as it has been explained, is hated and oppoſed by ſatan and all wicked men. The rulers of the darkneſs of this world, and all their followers hate this light, which is deſtructive to the kingdom of darkneſs, error and deluſion, which is the kingdom of the devil; which none can ſucceſsfully oppoſe, unleſs their loins are girded about with truth.

It might not be unprofitable to proceed to mention and explain the other parts of the chriſtian armour ſpecified by the apoſtle: But as this would ſwell this addreſs beyond the propoſed limits, it muſt be left to every ſerious chriſtian to examine and meditate on the whole of this important paſſage. One particular, however, here mentioned muſt not be wholly paſſed over, which is *faith*, that faith which is the ſubſtance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not ſeen, which is repreſented as eſſential to the whole, and covering all the reſt. This implies a firm and unſhaken truſt in the glorious head of the church, in his power, wiſdom, goodneſs and truth; a hope and confidence that he will maintain his own cauſe, protect his church and friends, and lead them on to complete victory, and in the beſt time and manner defeat all his and their enemies, and turn all they have done or will do to his own advantage and the benefit of his church and kingdom. Were it not for this faith the chriſtian muſt ſink into a ſpirit of

deſpondency and heavineſs; but in the exerciſe of this he puts on the garment of praiſe and joy, however much and long ſatan and wicked men may ſeem to ſucceed, prevail and proſper.

This ſubject will be concluded by a few cautions, directions, and motives to regard and obey theſe words of Chriſt, which are more applicable, and ſpeak more directly to the profeſſed chriſtians of this generation and thoſe which ſhall follow, than to any who have lived heretofore.

1. Be concerned to be awake. Do not ſleep as others, but watch and be ſober, leſt this day ſhould overtake you as a thief. Watch againſt every the leaſt deviation from the way of truth and duty. Look round you and ſee what others and the world are doing, and maintain that love to Chriſt and concern for his honour and intereſt as ſhall produce a moſt lively and ſenſible feeling of every thing which is againſt him and his cauſe, and be ready to oppoſe it in all proper ways.

2. Take heed what doctrines you imbibe as true. Study the bible with care and conſtancy. Be concerned to know and embrace the whole truth, which you can ſee through from beginning to the end; and though there be ſome things incomprehenſible in it, yet you can ſee the whole to be perfectly conſiſtent, and to form one

connected chain, which cannot be broken, and with which you may ſafely gird up your loins.

There are many errors embraced and propagated at this day, which are inconſiſtent with the connected chain of truth, which if conſiſtently followed would land men in total infidelity and atheiſm. They who are aſleep may be wholly inſenſible of this; but chriſtians ought to be awake, able to diſcern and guard againſt ſuch errors. It would take too much room to particulariſe here, and mention all the errors which have this tendency, and ſhow that they will land all thoſe who embrace, and conſiſtently follow them, in the darkneſs of atheiſm. But it may be of importance to mention one, which indeed is connected with many others. It is this, that the doctrines of the goſpel are of ſo little importance, that it is really no matter what men believe, if they do but live a moral life. It is eaſy to ſhow that this is not only contrary to the whole bible, but really ſets it aſide, as no better than deiſm or atheiſm itſelf.

3. The world is a dangerous ſnare to chriſtians at all times, eſpecially in this time when ſatan is with power and ſubtilty tempting men to worldly-mindedneſs among other vices. So far as men are inclined to infidelity, and immorality in general they love the world, and the things of the world, and are eagerly purſuing the plea-

ſures, profit and honors of it. And indeed this is the leading vice, and the parent of all the reſt. Chriſtians cannot give way to this, and keep their garments unſpotted by it. Their faith, if true and exerciſed with proper ſtrength, will overcome the world. They cannot ſerve God and mammon. All their concerns with the things of the world are ſubordinated to the honour and cauſe of Chriſt, and wholly devoted to this: and in their worldly buſineſs, they exerciſe as real religion in love to Chriſt and acting for him and his intereſt, as in any of their acts of piety and devotion. He who lays aſide his religion for a week, day or one hour, that he may take care of and purſue his worldly concerns in any manner and ſhape whatever, is ſo far from keeping, that he puts off the chriſtian garment. And if he returns one day in the week, or at any other time, when his temporal affairs will admit, to ſome attention to religion, and practice of it, he is ſo far from putting on the chriſtian garments, that in the ſight of him who has ſaid, "Ye cannot ſerve God and mammon," it is nothing but deceit and mockery. Let chriſtians beware of this, would they keep their garments in this evil time.

4. Take heed of engaging and acting in political and civil concerns ſo as to weaken or counteract the cauſe of chriſtianity, or loſe or abate your own religious exerciſes and zeal in the cauſe

of Chriſt. We live in a time when this caution is peculiarly proper and neceſſary; when the public are greatly divided in their ſentiments and conduct; and diſputes and political contention riſe very high, and are carried on with great heat and animoſity. This is in itſelf but a temporal, worldly matter, and comparatively of ſmall importance, ſo far as the intereſt of Chriſt and chriſtianity has no concern with it, and is not, in ſome reſpects involved in it; which is not often the caſe. But when religion is connected with civil affairs, the chriſtian feels intereſted in them; but, as in all other worldly concerns, he ſubordinates them to this all important intereſt. He will therefore be on that ſide in politics, which in his beſt and moſt mature judgment will moſt promote the cauſe of Chriſt. And if he thinks his acting with either party will not tend to help this cauſe, he will ſit ſtill, and act on neither ſide. And if he thinks religion calls him to ſpeak and act on one ſide, he will be calm and ſteady, and not join in the fierce contentions and unchriſtian words and actions of thoſe of either party; but condemn and reprove them. When profeſſed chriſtians are ſo engaged in politicks, as to ſubordinate the cauſe of religion to their political cauſe, and ſay and do that which tends to wound and ſink chriſtianity, or when the cauſe itſelf which they eſpouſe has evidently this tendency, they do not keep, but put off their chriſtian garments. Therefore let chriſtians take heed to themſelves in this point.

Should the body or majority of the people of a community or nation become ſo corrupt and careleſs about the intereſt of chriſtianity, as to join with profeſſed infidels in chooſing rulers who were known to be real enemies to chriſtianity, which may be in fact the caſe under the ſixth vial, which is now running; could a chriſtian in this caſe watch and keep his garments, and yet join with them to promote and carry on this buſineſs? And if this man ſhould attempt to excuſe and juſtify himſelf by ſaying that political matters and religion are entirely diſtinct and different things? therefore while he acts in the former and joins with thoſe who are attempting to deſtroy the cauſe of the latter, he leaves the latter with a view to reſume it, when he has anſwered his political ends; will not this make bad worſe? Let the diſcerning chriſtian who watches and keeps his garments, judge.

This particular will be concluded, by a quotation from Mr. Fuller, an Engliſh writer. In his preface to his book entitled "The goſpel its own witneſs," he writes as follows. "One thing which has contributed to the advantage of infidelity is the height to which political diſputes have ariſen, and the degree in which they have intereſted the paſſions and prejudices of mankind. Thoſe who favour the ſentiments of a ſet of men in one thing, will be in danger of thinking favourably of them in others; at leaſt they will not be apt to view them in ſo bad a light, as

if they had been advanced by perſons of different ſentiments in other things, as well as in religion. It is true, there may be nothing more friendly to infidelity in the *nature* of one political ſyſtem than another; nevertheleſs it becomes thoſe who think favourably of the political principles of infidels to take heed leſt they be inſenſibly drawn away to think lightly of religion. All the nations of the earth, and all the diſputes on the beſt or worſt mode of government, compared with this, are leſs than nothing and vanity.

"To this it may be added, that the eagerneſs with which men engage in political diſputes, take which ſide they may, is unfavourable to a zealous adherence to the goſpel. Any mere worldly object, if it becomes the principal thing which occupies our thoughts and affections will weaken our attachment to religion: And if we once become cool and indifferent to this, we are in the high road to infidelity."

This addreſs will be concluded by ſuggeſting motives to pay ſpecial attention to theſe words of Chriſt, and carefully obey them.

1. Jeſus Chriſt ſpeaks in theſe remarkable words particularly and moſt expreſsly to thoſe who live in this day, as has been ſhown. Therefore to diſregard them *now* will be highly and in a peculiar degree criminal and dangerous.

2. If you do not watch and keep your garments, consider the awful, the infinitely dreadful consequence. Christ will come upon you as a thief, and you shall not know what hour he will come. The consequence will be your suffering all evils of this day, and final and everlasting destruction.

3. Many and great evils are fast coming, on and are even at the door, in which the church will partake, and greatly suffer, even to a degree at present unknown. In the time of the prevalence of infidelity and immorality, and all kinds of vice which attend it, christians must suffer many ways, and endure great trials and temptations to turn aside and sin. And many calamities and divine judgments will take place before the sixth vial is ended, as a warning and anticipation of the battle which is coming on, as has been observed. In these, christians must suffer in a greater or less degree with others. And they will doubtless come suddenly and unexpected to all, who are not prepared to meet them by watching and keeping their garments.

And christians have no warrant to conclude, that persecution will not take place before the vial which is now running is out. And how soon and suddenly it will come on, none can tell. There is nothing in the volume of Revelation which intimates that the church shall be no more persecuted, and that to a degree beyond

any thing of the kind that has yet taken place. And there are ſome paſſages of ſcripture which ſeem to foretel the contrary, ſome of which will be here mentioned. The prophet Jeremiah ſpeaks of the ſufferings of Jacob, that is of the church of Chriſt, as peculiarly great in the time immediately previous to her deliverance and proſperity which Chriſt ſhall effect when he ſhall come to reign in the millennium. [Chap. xxx. 4—9.] "Alas! for that day is great, ſo that none is like it: *It is even the time of Jacob's trouble;* but he ſhall be ſaved out of it. For it ſhall come to paſs *in that day*, ſaith the Lord of hoſts that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burſt thy bonds, and ſtrangers ſhall no more ſerve themſelves of him. But they ſhall ſerve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raiſe up unto them." By *David* Chriſt is meant. This expreſſion is frequently uſed by the prophets to denote the reign of Chriſt in the millennium. The ſame we may underſtand as predicted, Dan. xii. 1. This is expreſſed by Zechariah [chap. xiv. 1, 2, 3.] "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy ſpoil ſhall be divided in the midſt of thee. For I will gather all nations againſt Jeruſalem to battle, and the city ſhall be taken, and the houſes rifled, and the women raviſhed, and half of the city ſhall go forth into captivity, and the reſidue of the people ſhall not be cut off from the city. Then ſhall the Lord go forth and fight againſt theſe nations, as when he fought in the day of battle."

Who can attentively read this paſſage with what follows, without perceiving that in this prediction there is reference to the ſame events which are foretold under the ſixth and ſeventh vials in the Revelation? When it is ſaid, "half of the city ſhall go forth into captivity," the meaning probably is, that the falſe profeſſors in the church, which is meant by Jeruſalem, ſhall, in the time of perſecution, fall away and join the enemy. The reſt who keep their garments ſhall be ſaved.

Theſe paſſages of ſcripture, and others which might be mentioned, ſeem to indicate that the time of the greateſt ſufferings of the church is yet to come, and is faſt approaching, and even at the door. There is nothing in the preſent ſtate or diſpoſition of mankind that is the leaſt ſecurity againſt this, but much to the contrary. What has taken place in Europe the laſt century, and in a few years paſt, and is now progreſſing there, and even in America, is an evidence of this. Unbelievers, of whom there are many, think and ſay they have found out that chriſtianity has been the ſource of moſt of the evils which mankind ſuffer: and they cannot be happy until chriſtianity and chriſtians are wholly ſuppreſſed and deſtroyed. Nothing can prevent their attempting this, by practiſing the moſt cruel and horrid perſecution of chriſtians that has ever yet been known, unleſs reſtrained from it by God, which there is no reaſon to expect,

but the contrary, from the prophecy in the Revelation, which has been conſidered, and thoſe juſt now mentioned.

This may be neceſſary as a mean to purge the viſible church of the many and great corruptions in doctrine and practice, which have been introduced and do continue; and to detect and exclude the many falſe profeſſors: and to purify and render real chriſtians more holy, and ſo prepared for that more perfect ſtate which ſhall commence with the millennium. It is predicted, and probably reſpects this very time, that "many ſhall be purified and made white and tried." [Daniel xii. 10.] When Chriſt ſhall come in this way he will ſit as a refiner and purifier of ſilver: and who ſhall ſtand, when he appeareth? None but thoſe who watch and keep their garments.

4. The ſure and only way to be bleſſed, is to watch and keep your garments. This is the *only* way. This is implied in theſe words of Chriſt, as has been obſerved. And that it is a *ſure* way, is as certain as it is that Chriſt himſelf ſpake theſe words. And it is implied that they ſhall be in a peculiar manner and degree bleſſed, who in this day of great temptation and ſuffering, are faithful to Chriſt, and perſevere in adherence to him and his cauſe through great oppoſition and trials.

END OF THE ADDRESS.

A

DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED AT

NEWPORT, RHODE-ISLAND,

AT THE FUNERAL OF THE

REV. SAMUEL HOPKINS, D. D.

Pastor of the first Congregational Church there.

WHO DIED ON THE

20th of December, A. D. 1803,

IN THE EIGHTY-THIRD YEAR OF HIS AGE,

AND SIXTIETH OF HIS MINISTRY.

BY LEVI HART, D. D.

PASTOR OF THE NORTH CHURCH IN PRESTON.

FUNERAL DISCOURSE.

2 KINGS ii. 12.

———*My father, my father, the chariot of Iſrael and the horſemen thereof!*

THIS pathetic exclamation was uttered by the prophet Eliſha, when he ſaw his venerable teacher and guide aſcending to glory in a chariot of fire. The prophet Elijah lived in a very degenerate age, and was commiſſioned to prophecy to a ſtupid and obſtinate generation. Yet he perſevered with inflexible reſolution and unabating fidelity, in declaring the counſels of God, and warning the wicked of approaching deſtruction.

When advanced in life, he called Eliſha to an immediate attendance on him, and gave him the needful inſtructions, for the place he was deſtined to fill, as his ſucceſſor in the prophetic office.* Their mutual expreſſions of pious friendſhip previous to their ſeparation were inſtructive and edifying. Aſk, ſaid the old prophet to his friend, "what I ſhall do for thee before I be taken away from thee." "I pray thee, ſaid Eliſha, that a double portion of thy ſpirit may reſt upon me."

* 1 Kings xix. 19—21.

What are the friendſhips of the world when compared with this?—We ſee an aged Miniſter of God about to aſcend. But he could not leave the world until he had performed the laſt kind office to his beloved pupil. A parting bleſſing too was the object of Eliſha's prayer. Their wiſhes united in the moſt valuable acquiſition;—"The ſpirit of Elijah reſted on Eliſha."

Happy for him, as it opened an extenſive field of uſefulneſs and felicity on earth, happy for his country and generation, as he was hereby qualified to ſucceed his maſter, as their guide, defence and ſtay.—Happy for the old prophet as it occupied his laſt moments, on earth, in benefiting his moſt beloved friend whom he left behind.—Happy for them both, as it ſerved the intereſt of God's holy kingdom, as it united them in more endearing bonds, and prepared the way for mutual congratulation at their re-union, in the bleſſed manſions occupied by the ſpirits of the juſt made perfect.

In the words of the text we have the expreſſive exclamation of the young prophet, at the aſcent of his maſter.—"My father, my father, the chariot of Iſrael and the horſemen thereof!"

The import of theſe expreſſions will be plain and ſignificant to us, if we remember that the principal defence and ſafety of the ancient Aſiatic nations, was in their cavalry. They were

accuſtomed to fighting either on horſeback or in chariots, built for war, and armed in ſuch a manner, as to be well adapted for defence and to be terrible to the enemy. Theſe in a campaign country, were the principal ſtrength of an army; though they could not be brought to act with equal ſucceſs in the hills and mountains. Hence that ſaying of the ſervants of the king of Syria, after their defeat by the men of Iſrael. "Their Gods are Gods of the hills. Therefore they were ſtronger than we. But let us fight againſt them in the plain, and we ſhall be ſtronger than they!" *

From various ſcripture texts, it appears that God's people were directed to place their confidence in him alone for protection and ſafety. That as a viſible evidence of this they were not allowed to multiply horſes and chariots, that when taken in war from their enemies the horſes ſhould be diſabled from war and their chariots ſhould be burned.†

From the whole it appears, that Iſrael was under the peculiar care of Jehovah, their God and king; and that they were to manifeſt their dependence on him by remaining deſtitute of thoſe means of defence, which were common to other nations.

* 1 Kings xx. 23. † Deut. xvii. 16. Joſh. xi. 6—9. Pſalm xx. 7. Iſai. ii. 7. xxxi. 1.

It is however important to remark, that altho' this choſen people were protected by God without the means adopted by other nations, it was not his good pleaſure, uſually, to defend and ſave them without any means. It is edifying to obſerve the wiſdom and goodneſs of God in conſtituting means for the accompliſhment of his deſigns, of wiſdom and love, to his people. Though it would be equally eaſy with him to effect them without means. This is eminently illuſtrated, in his providential diſpenſations to his ancient choſen people. The bleſſings they enjoyed were uſually conveyed from heaven to them, through the inſtrumentality of able and pious rulers, prophets and teachers.

This diſplays the intent and meaning of our text. Under the divine ſuperintendance, Elijah had been to Iſrael all that which horſes and chariots were deſigned to be to other nations: even their ſtrength and ſtay. His venerable age, character, and relation to Eliſha, as his guide and teacher, induced him to apply the honorable epithet of father. Hence, paſſing all other applications of the paſſage before us, we ſhall attend to the following propoſition, viz. To ſhow in what reſpects, able and pious teachers of religion, are the means of defence and ſafety to the people of God. It is admitted that ſafety is from God, as really, when brought to us through the agency of men, as when imme-

diately from him. It is alſo admitted, that the truth in the text applies to public men in all relations to ſociety, who are able and who faithfully ſerve their generation by the will of God. But at preſent we apply it only to the able and pious teachers of religion.

We ſhall attempt to illuſtrate and confirm it by the following obſervations, viz.

1. The public teachers of religion are qualified and appointed by God for this purpoſe. Scripture hiſtory abundantly confirms this obſervation.

Moſes was deſigned by God for a public teacher of religion. Proviſion was therefore made for his education, in Egyptian, (as well as Hebrew) learning. He was then carried through the ſchool of adverſity in a ſtrange land, employed in the ſolitary and contemplative life of a ſhepherd. At length he received the divine commiſſion conſtituting him the leader and ſhepherd of the flock of Iſrael. Great and difficult were the duties of his office. How could he have diſcharged them without that diſtinguiſhed ſhare of grace, of gifts and learning with which he was endued? Who would have guided the choſen tribes to the land of liberty and reſt had there not been a Moſes?

The duties of a public teacher require a ſound

underſtanding, and other mental powers active and vigorous. A well cultivated mind and a heart enlarged in the ſervice of God, and for the good of men. Without each of theſe, and eſpecially this laſt, there is ſmall ground to hope that the teacher will be found to be "the chariot of Iſrael and the horſemen thereof."

Hence we may reſt in the comfortable proſpect, that when it pleaſes God to uſe any one for this purpoſe he will raiſe up and qualify him; and that he calls to this important ſervice thoſe only whom he hath firſt qualified to perform it. Such he calls to it and aſſiſts them in it, and to ſuch the promiſes of the divine preſence and aſſiſtance are made. The manner of his conſtituting public teachers, and inducting them to their office has been various in the different ages of the church: but all terminating in the ſame object. The perſons are marked out, either by the immediate agency of God, or by him through the agency of man. But always ſo as to imply the importance of the before named qualifications.

2. The inſtructions of public teachers, who are qualified for their work, are deſigned and adapted to guide, protect and ſave their hearers. Theſe inſtructions have been various, as to form and circumſtances, in the different ages of the world; but have always been adapted to the capacity and ſtate of man, to lead him to the true

knowledge of God, of himself and the way to perfect and durable felicity.

Under the chriſtian revelation they are abundantly clear.

It is the object of the public teacher to lead his hearers to be wiſe and happy, by inſtructing them concerning the being and perfections of the one living and true God.—The nature, extent and perfection of his providential and moral government.—The nature, relations, and proſpects of man as an accountable being.—The extent and perfection of the moral law, and the ſin and ruin of man as a tranſgreſſor.—Utterly depraved, and juſtly condemned and in a hopeleſs ſtate, without the intervention of ſovereign grace.—And the wonderful method of grace for man, exhibited in the mediatorial ſyſtem, through which there is complete ſalvation for the moſt guilty of our race who fly for refuge, to the hope ſet before them in the goſpel.—By an exhibition of theſe and other connected truths, the public teacher leads his hearers to the light of life; and if they receive the truth in the love of it, they will not fail of obtaining in the final iſſue, complete deliverance from the ruins of the apoſtacy and an inheritance among all thoſe who are ſanctified through faith in Chriſt Jeſus.

3. The example, of good public teachers, is excellently adapted to enforce their inſtructions,

ſo as to protect, guide, and ſave their hearers. Notwithſtanding the imperfections of the preſent ſtate, good public teachers do in a meaſure exemplify their inſtructions, by their pious converſation. This, above moſt other things, is adapted to influence their hearers, by fixing a ſtrong conviction on their minds of the truth and importance of their inſtructions; the guilty and miſerable ſtate of man, as a ſinner, the great and awful danger of final ruin, the neceſſity of goſpel grace, the preciouſneſs of Chriſt, the excellency of chriſtianity, and the worth of an intereſt in the divine favor. The influence of example is well known to be great. That of ſuperiors has peculiar advantage; in which relation, public inſtructors are generally viewed by moſt of their hearers.

If they are poſſeſſed of a candid and ingenuous mind, in matters of religion, they cannot fail of profiting by the combined influence of good inſtruction and pious example.

Man is expoſed to many evils from the corruptions of his own heart, from the temptations of the world, and eſpecially from evil men, and from the great adverſary of good, "who goeth about like a roaring lion ſeeking whom he may devour."*

* 1 Peter v. 8.

The inſtructions of wiſdom and the example of good men united, are excellently adapted to guide him in his way, to protect him from all theſe enemies and bring him to final peace and ſafety.

The bible hiſtory of ancient Iſrael is eminently adapted to illuſtrate and confirm the truth we are conſidering. While Moſes and Joſhua lived, and while the Elders remained who over-lived Joſhua, the people obeyed the commandments of the Lord; but when theſe were removed, they turned to idolatry. The ſame truth is eſtabliſhed by the hiſtory of the good leaders and the evil ones in Judah down to the Babyloniſh captivity. When they had good kings and prieſts, they kept the divine commands; but no ſooner were theſe removed and ſucceeded by evil ones, than the people departed from the Lord.

The hiſtory of good Jehoiada deſerves our attention. He was an able and faithful inſtructor, and his example confirmed the truth of what he taught. In conſequence of this, the kingdom was reſtored from the very corrupt ſtate, into which it had fallen under the uſurpation of the wicked Athaliah, and the people followed the Lord all the days of Jehoiada, and he was exceedingly venerable in their eyes. The inſpired writer of the hiſtory informs us, that, "Jehoiada waxed old and was full of days when he died,

an hundred and thirty years old was he when he died. And they buried him in the city of David, among the kings, becauſe he had done good in Iſrael, both towards God, and toward his houſe."*

4. The influence of public teachers in preparing others to ſucceed them, when they ſhall be removed, is highly beneficial to the church of God. It is uſually one part of the labor of eminent teachers in religion to form the minds of youthful ſtudents, to fill important places hereafter. By this, divine knowledge is preſerved in the world, and able and well qualified public teachers are provided for the church; and thus, from generation to generation, there is a happy ſupply to repair the waſte of time and death.

Thus was the prophet Elijah employed in his day, and Eliſha after him, in training up "the ſons of the prophets," for important ſervice, in their day, and to tranſmit to the children of future times, the knowledge of divine truth.

Thus alſo are eminent teachers employed in this and former ages. Some propagate divine knowledge by oral inſtructions, and ſome by their writings, and ſome by both, eſpecially ſince the art of printing has been known. By each of theſe, the uſefulneſs of able and pious

* 2 Chronicles xxiv. 15, 16.

public teachers is much advanced. How vaſt is the benefit even to us, of this very diſtant age, from the writings of Moſes and the prophets and other ſacred penmen of the old teſtament and the new! and how great will be the debt of future ages to the end of time! Yea, may we not expect that the bleſſed in heaven will be wiſer, better, and more happy forever, not only from their knowledge of the ſcriptures, obtained in this life, but alſo from their advance even there, in happifying diſcoveries in the deep myſteries wrapped up in theſe divine books! May not the pleaſing reflection extend, (with the limitation due to the beſt publications of uninſpired man) to the many excellent books on divine ſubjects, which have been publiſhed in this and the preceding ages? What an accumulation of benefits to the church of God, advancing in an ever increaſing proportion, from this ſource; and how abundant the evidence that able and pious public teachers, are "the chariot of Iſrael, and the horſemen thereof!"

5. Able and pious public teachers are the defence and ſafety of the church by their prayers. Though it is equally eaſy with God to grant bleſſings to his people, without the application of this or any other mean; yet it hath ſeemed good to unerring wiſdom to eſtabliſh this connexion, and fix the plan of beſtowment in anſwer to prayer. Notwithſtanding the ſupplications of the moſt pious can make no change in the coun-

ſels of God, they may prepare the ſubject for the reception of the good ſought, and anſwer other purpoſes of fixing this connexion, which in the divine mind are amply ſufficient.

That ſuch a connexion is fixed in the revealed will of God, between the prayers of his people and the beſtowment of the needed bleſſings, is evident from the hiſtory of the prayers of Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moſes, Joſhua, Samuel, the pious kings of Judah, the prophets of the old teſtament and the apoſtles of the new. Men of this deſcription are repreſented by God as thoſe who "make up the hedge and ſtand in the gap before him for the land, that he ſhould not deſtroy it."* Such in their day were Abraham,† Moſes,‡ and Aaron,§ and Phineas, and ſuch, in all ages, are the able and pious leaders of the church of God. What chriſtian therefore can heſitate to believe that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.‖ So manifeſt is the truth that able and pious public teachers are the defence, protection, and ſafety of the church, or, they are "the chariot of Iſrael and the horſemen thereof."

IMPROVEMENT.

1. Able and pious leaders in the church of Chriſt are a great bleſſing. Theſe take a place and fill a relation in the chriſtian church, in many reſpects, ſimilar to that of Elijah, Jehoiada, and

* Ezek. xxii. 30. † Gen. xviii. 23, 32. ‡ Num. xiv. 11—20. xvi. 44. § Chap. xxv. 6, 13. ‖ James v. 16.

other pious leaders under the ancient diſpenſation.

Their miniſtrations ought to be thankfully received and wiſely improved. The wiſdom and goodneſs of divine inſtitutions, obvious indeed in other caſes, are eminently conſpicuous in this. The great things, which God effects through the inſtrumentality of theſe earthen veſſels, abundantly "prove the excellency of the power to be of God and not of man," and in various reſpects this method of divine operation is adapted to the character of God and the condition of man. How deeply doth it concern thoſe who are employed in the chriſtian miniſtry, to magnify their office, by diſcharging its duties to the beſt of their ability: and to ſee that the miniſtry be not blamed through any fault on their part.

Animating is the thought of imitating though at a humble diſtance the piety, the wiſdom, the philanthropy of Elijah, of Jehoiada and other venerable and uſeful characters under the ancient diſpenſation and the new. The hope of uniting (in the bleſſed exerciſes and enjoyments of futurity) with the long liſt of faithful ſervants in the houſe of God, muſt exceedingly animate us, in the proſpect of that world, and render the labours and ſorrows of the preſent ſtate, light and momentary.

2. The aged and wiſe in the chriſtian miniſtry ſhould do their utmoſt for the inſtruction and

improvement of their younger brethren in divine knowledge, and to encourage them to diligence and fidelity in their work; and the younger ſhould improve the ſeaſon of benefiting by their inſtructions, before they are removed.

Agreeable to the language in our context, the aged ſhould ſay to the young, "aſk what we ſhall do for you before we be taken away from you." And the young ſhould reply we "pray that a double portion of your ſpirit may reſt on us." "This is truly friendſhip in death"—how amiable! how congenial to the ſoft and tender emotions of chriſtian love, in the near proſpect of ſeparation! Great are the benefits to be derived to the church of God by ſuch friendly intercourſe between the aged in the chriſtian miniſtry and the young. By this, the treaſure of theological knowledge, the reſult of many ſtudious years, and of the experience of a long life, may be, in a happy degree, tranſmitted from age to youth, and the fund of religious knowledge and experience may be conſtantly accumulating; and the wiſe and good will live in their ſucceſſors.

3. When the aged and venerable in the chriſtian miniſtry, are removed from our world, ſucceſſors are called to take up the lamentation in our text.

Such are "the men who make up the hedge and ſtand in the gap."—Their removal indicates the divine diſpleaſure. They are often taken

from the evil to come. Thus it was in the caſe of the good king Joſiah, and in many others. When men eminently uſeful in the church on earth, are removed from our world, the means of our protection and ſafety are thus far removed; and we are eminently expoſed to be the prey to our enemies. This is no leſs true in regard to the intereſts of the church of God, than to thoſe of ſociety in the preſent world. God preſides over both and protects them, but he doth it by the inſtrumentality of thoſe excellent men who ſtand in the gap. Under ſuch divine rebukes, therefore, ſurvivors ſhould be deeply humbled; for however it may be in mercy to the departed, it is an expreſſion of divine diſpleaſure to them for their ſins. They ſhould, therefore, accept the puniſhment of them, and acknowledge the righteouſneſs of God, in their affliction. They ſhould learn by it, the great evil of ſin, as being againſt God, diſplayed in the extenſive reign of death and all other evils. They ſhould be deeply humbled under the tokens of divine diſpleaſure —they ſhould "be ſtill and know that he is God."

They ſhould learn the vanity of the world, the dying nature of earthly good, and the uncertainty of the deareſt enjoyments below the ſkies. Above all, they ſhould learn their entire dependence on God, and turn off their expectations from creatures, and place them on him, caſt themſelves and all their concerns on his grace,

"and be careful for nothing, but in every thing, by prayer and ſupplication with thankſgiving, let their requeſts be made known."

They ſhould not, however, in mourning for the venerable dead "ſorrow as thoſe who have no hope," for as Jeſus died and roſe again, even ſo, thoſe who ſleep in Jeſus will God bring with him." This "wipes the reproach of ſaints away and clears the honor of his word." By this it appears that "he is not aſhamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city," even "an houſe not made with hands eternal in the heavens."

Let us hail the ſpirits of the juſt made perfect! The reſurrection morning and the complete and unfading glories of immortality! Bleſſed ſtate where ſin and ſorrow, pain and death, never come. Where all tears are wiped away. Where our departed chriſtian friends, and the long liſt of our venerable and pious anceſtors, "have entered into peace are reſting in their beds, each one walking in his uprightneſs."*

Will not the hope of a reunion with them in the world of ſpirits, diſſipate the dark and melancholy gloom which hangs round their grave, and dry the falling tear—rather teach us to be, "as ſorrowful yet always rejoicing." Holy joy, ſweet peace and everlaſting conſolation, mingle in the ſorrows of parting chriſtian friends.

* Iſaiah lvii. 2.

" The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
Is privileg'd above the common walk
Of virtuous life; quite in the verge of heav'n."

4. Surviving leaders in the church of God ſhould take up the falling mantle of the venerable dead, and ſay "where is the Lord God of Elijah?" They ſhould imitate their ſpirit, their zeal and their active fidelity.

The reſpectful debt of chriſtian friendſhip, in the funeral ſolemnities, being paid, they recollect that to do the higheſt honor to their departed friends they muſt emulate their virtues, and "follow them wherein they followed Chriſt." That the removal of men, eminent in the church of God, leaves a gap in the walls of the city which muſt be guarded by others. A vacant place in the field of labor which muſt be ſupplied by freſh hands, or by the more active and unremitted exertions of ſurvivors, or by both. Survivors muſt be "baptized for the dead." They muſt advance to fill the ranks left vacant by the fall of thoſe before them. In ſuch a caſe, how powerful the motives to chriſtian miniſters, for unceaſing labors in the cauſe of truth, and for united ſupplications to "the Lord of the harveſt that he would ſend forth laborers into his harveſt." "By whom Lord ſhall Jacob riſe for he is ſmall."

5. We are called to a particular application of the ſubject to the preſent ſolemnity. In celebrating the funeral of this venerable miniſter of Chriſt, we are conſtrained to repeat the language in our text: "Our father, our father, the char-

iot of Iſrael and the horſemen thereof." In how many reſpects he was ſo, is moſt fully known by thoſe whoſe intercourſe with him was longeſt and moſt intimate. Furniſhed, by the Father of lights, with mental powers eminently adapted for critical and patient inveſtigation, and early devoted to literary purſuits, he paſſed the uſual courſe of academic ſtudies, and graduated at Yale College in New-Haven in the year 1741, juſt as a moſt uncommon and extenſive attention to religion was beginning to appear in New-England and elſewhere. Having hopefully become a ſubject of the ſaving grace of God, he reſolved to conſecrate his life and talents to the ſervice of God in the goſpel of his Son. He wiſely choſe the eminent Mr. Edwards, then of Northampton for his director in his theological ſtudies.

Having finiſhed the courſe of his preparitory ſtudy, he was regularly recommended to preach the goſpel, and in due time was inducted into the paſtoral office.

His field of miniſterial labors has been at Great Barrington in Maſſachuſetts, and at Newport in Rhode Iſland: to this laſt his ſtated labors have been directed ever ſince the year 1770, a few years excepted, when the congregation was diſperſed by the events of the revolutionary war. Moſt of thoſe who were active in his ſettlement here, have gone before him to the world of ſpirits, the few who remain are waiting the ſummons. Though his days were prolonged beyond

the common lot, we cannot witneſs the removal of ſo much wiſdom, piety and uſefulneſs from the church but with the deepeſt ſenſibility.

Thoſe who beſt knew him and are moſt able to judge of miniſterial eminence, will agree that he was, even beyond moſt evangelical miniſters, the chariot of Iſrael and the horſemen thereof, in all thoſe reſpects, which have been already noticed. For this important work he was eminently qualified by natural endowments, acquired knowledge, and divine grace.

His inſtructions as a chriſtian teacher were plain, clear, impreſſive and entertaining to the attentive hearer, conveying the moſt eſſential and practical knowledge. His example confirmed to his hearers the truths and duties which he taught. He was eminently uſeful to young miniſters and to thoſe preparing for the chriſtian miniſtry, by verbal inſtructions, and by various publications on theological ſubjects. All his printed works may be read with profit, and eſpecially the ſyſtem of divinity in two volumes, which he publiſhed in the latter part of his life.

We add, that he was the defence and ſafety to the church by his prayers; in which we have abundant reaſon to believe he was devout, ardent and perſevering to the laſt. In theſe reſpects and others not mentioned he was a pillar in the church below, a man to make up the hedge and ſtand in the gap.

While we drop the filial tear in committing

his venerable duſt to the houſe of ſilence, as a common loſs to the church on earth, ſtill more oppreſſive ſorrow muſt pierce the hearts of his family connections and the people of his charge.

Yet while the bereaved widow dwells on the ſources of grief, ſhe ought not to forget the ſprings of conſolation. She is well aſſured that this event is the work of infinite perfection. She doubts not but the removal of her beſt friend on earth, is an important acceſſion to the general aſſembly and church of the firſt born, who are written in heaven, to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect. She firmly believes that hereby God is glorified, the Redeemer exalted, and his kingdom benefited. That this event is well adapted to wean her affections from earth—to ſmooth her own paſſage through the dark valley, and animate her in the proſpect of joining that bleſſed and holy ſociety, where ſo many of her chriſtian friends are gathered together and are waiting her arrival. Thankful for all the good ſhe has enjoyed on earth, in the company of the ſaints, and for the opportunity given her, by the near connexion between them, to miniſter to the comfort and promote the uſefulneſs of that ſervant of the Lord. Keeping in mind, that though chriſtian friends and miniſters die, Jeſus Chriſt lives and is the ſame, yeſterday, to day and forever: ſhe will caſt all her cares and ſorrows on him and follow him as the ſhepherd and biſhop of her ſoul, and realize his moſt gracious promiſe that he will never leave her nor forſake her.

May the ſurviving children of this venerable father ſo wiſely improve his removal, that they may be ſecure in the protection and favor of that father in heaven, who will guide them by counſel and afterward receive them to glory, and leave to their children, when they die, the bleſſed hope concerning them, which they entertain reſpecting their father.

The members of this church and congregation, will notice the work of the Lord and conſider the operation of his hand. Separation by death between a miniſter and his people, is an event weighty and important. His province is to watch for ſouls as they who muſt give account; theirs to take heed how they hear and to hear ſo that their ſouls may live. In the review of many paſt years under the miniſtry of their late Paſtor, this people will enquire how they have heard, what religious improvement they have made and how they are prepared to meet him, and what is infinitely more ſolemn, to meet their judge, and render their account for the uſe of their religious privileges and for all things done in the body.

May they ſo remember his words as to practiſe the holy religion he taught them, and teach the ſame diligently to their children, and after all the calamities ſuffered by this ſociety and this town, in thoſe years which have paſſed over our heads, may the good ſhepherd take them by the hand and lead them in the right way. And though the Lord hath given them the bread of